GOVERNMENT OF GHANA

MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS
NATIONAL YOUTH AUTHORITY

NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY (2022-2032)

THEME:

"BENEFIT FOR YOUTH INVOLVE YOUTH: TOGETHER FOR A PROSPEROUS FUTURE"

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FOREWORD

The National Youth Policy is a coordinated framework formulated to guide the development and implementation of interventions that will build an empowered youth for national development and their active participation in global affairs. It places optimum responsibilities on key stakeholders, particularly, the youth themselves to take advantage of the opportunities created by its implementation. The government recognises the youth as an important asset in nation-building and is therefore committed to harnessing their demographic dividend through increased investment in issues affecting them and sustainable partnership with all development stakeholders.

The issues that affect youth development in Ghana include economic and financial exclusion, adverse socio-cultural practices, a mismatch between knowledge acquired and industry requirements, inaccessibility of education and educational facilities, minimal skills development, low participation in governance, limited access to health services and weak development support services, among others. Nonetheless, the Ghanaian teeming youth have self-creativity and innovation backed by significant knowledge of Information and Communications Technology. However, these appear misapplied and usually unprofitable to many.

Over the years, succeeding Governments have embarked on pro-youth programmes, including Free Senior High School; Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Programmes, Youth Employment Schemes, massive incentives, and financial support programmes for youth enterprise development, among others. It must be emphasised that these programmes are yielding desired dividends but seem inadequate for addressing the ever-increasing changing situations of the youth. In order to tackle this phenomenon and chart the path for sustainable youth development, Government is determined to spearhead and engender sustainable partnerships with all stakeholders to tap into the creative potentials of the youth. Thus, the National Youth Policy guides all-inclusive, integrated and coherent youth development.

The policy which spans from 2022 - 2032 is expected to be implemented by all stakeholders in the public and private sectors, state and non-state actors, organisations, and individuals. The Government of Ghana, through the Ministry of Youth and Sports, will work assiduously with stakeholders to ensure that components of the policy are effectively and efficiently implemented and coordinated.

It is my firm belief that the zeal, passion, and commitment exhibited by

stakeholders in the process of developing this policy will equally be manifested in the implementation. Government, on its part, will remain resolute, and focused and will provide the necessary leadership and direction, to ensure that investment yields the desired dividend. I must say that national development must be holistic, all inclusive, and futuristic, taking cognisance of resource mobilisation and deployment to critical sections of the economy. Directing resources to youth development is a kingpin to national progress and global cohesion. This is, surely, the commitment and dedication of Government and by extension, the Ministry of Youth and Sports. I encourage the youth to remain focused, open, and guided by national tenets.

HON. MUSTAPHA USSIF (MP)
MINISTER FOR YOUTH AND SPORTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The development of this policy was rigorous, thorough, coordinated, and all-inclusive. The success associated with this process emanated from numerous stakeholders dedicating and committing their time and resources to ensure that the output is not only desirable but also fit for purpose. The Ministry of Youth and Sports recognises these invaluable contributions and remains grateful to institutions and organisations from the National Development Planning Commission, Technical Committee, Federation of Persons with Disability Organisations, Youth Groups, Youth-Focused Civil Society Organisations, Women Groups, the United Nations Systems, Guild of Professional Youth Workers, Academia, STAR Ghana, ActionAid, Commonwealth Secretariat, Traditional Authorities, Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies and Political Parties in Ghana.

The contribution of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Youth, Sports and Culture, the direction of the Governing Boards of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and the National Youth Authority cannot be downplayed. Hence, we hold tremendous gratitude for the personalities of these institutions.

Finally, our appreciation goes to the Government of Ghana for all the guidance and direction as well as the resources provided and investment in youth development.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

4IR	-	Fourth Industrial Revolution
AfCFTA	-	African Continental Free Trade Area
AfDB	-	African Development Bank
AI	-	Artificial Intelligence
AIDS	-	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
APAYE	-	African Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment
AU	-	African Union
BECE	-	Basic Education Certification Examination
CARES	-	Covid-19 Alleviation and Revitalisation of Enterprises Support
CBOs	-	Community-based Organisations
CHRAG	-	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
CNC	-	Centre for National Culture
COVOG	-	Coalition of Volunteering Organisations, Ghana
CPESDP	-	Coordinated Programme for Economic and Social Development
CSOs	-	Civil Society Organisations
DACF	-	District Assemblies Common Fund
DPs	-	Development Partners
DYLG	-	Democratic Youth League of Ghana
ECOWAS	-	Economic Community of West African States
EPA	-	Environmental Protection Agency
ESD	-	Extension Services Department
FAO	-	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FBOs	-	Faith-based Organisations
GAC	-	Ghana Aids Commission
GEA	-	Ghana Employers Association
GEA	-	Ghana Enterprises Agency
GEPA	-	Ghana Export Promotion Authority

GES	-	Ghana Education Service
GETFUND	-	Ghana Education Trust Fund
GFD	-	Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations
GHS	-	Ghana Health Service
GIFEC	-	Ghana Investment Fund for Electronic Communications
GIPA	-	Ghana Investment Promotion Authority
GIPC	-	Ghana Investment Promotion Centre
GIS	-	Ghana Immigration Service
GIZ	-	German Development Agency
GNCCI	-	Ghana National Chamber of Commerce and Industry
GPS	-	Ghana Police Service
GRA	-	Ghana Revenue Authority
GSS	-	Ghana Statistical Service
GYC	-	Ghana Youth Council
GYEEDA	-	Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Programme
GYF	-	Ghana Youth Federation
HIV	-	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus
HND	-	Higher National Diploma
ICT	-	Information and Communications Technology
IFAD	-	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IHME	-	Institute for Health Metrics Evaluation
ILO	-	International Labour Organisation
LEAP	-	Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty
M&E	-	Monitoring and Evaluation
MASLOC	-	Microfinance and Small Loans Centre
MDAs	-	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MELR	-	Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations
MESTI	-	Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation
MFA	-	Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture

MHA	-	Mental Health Authority
MLGDRD	-	Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development
MMDAs	-	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
MMDCEs	-	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives
MoCD	-	Ministry of Communication and Digitalisation
MoE	-	Ministry of Education
MoF	-	Ministry of Finance
MoFA	-	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MoH	-	Ministry of Health
MoI	-	Ministry of the Interior
MoJOAG	-	Ministry of Justice and Attorney-General's Department
MoTI	-	Ministry of Trade and Industry
MoYS	-	Ministry of Youth and Sports
NAB	-	National Accreditation Board
NABCO	-	Nation Builders Corps
NACoC	-	Narcotics Control Commission
NASPA	-	National Service Personnel Association
NCTE	-	National Council of Tertiary Education
NDPC	-	National Development Planning Commission
NEIP	-	National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme
NGOs	-	Non-Governmental Organisations
NHIA	-	National Health Insurance Authority
NLC	-	National Labour Commission
NRC	-	National Redemption Council
NS	-	National Security
NSC	-	National Service Corps
NSS	-	National Service Scheme
NYA	-	National Youth Authority
NYC	-	National Youth Council

NYEP	-	National Youth Employment Programme
NYOC	-	National Youth Organising Commission
NYP	-	National Youth Policy
OHLGS	-	Office of the Head of Local Government Service
PAYE	-	Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment
PHC	-	Population and Housing Census
PPP	-	Public Private Partnership
PWDs	-	Persons with Disabilities
PYD	-	Positive Youth Development
RPL	-	Recognition of Prior Learning
SDGs	-	Sustainable Development Goals
STEM	-	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
SWOT	-	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TUC	-	Trades Union Congress
TVET	-	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	-	United Nations
UNDESA	-	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	-	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UKAID	-	United Kingdom Agency for International Development
USAID	-	United States Agency for International Development
VOLU	-	Voluntary Work Camps Association of Ghana
WASSCE	-	West Africa Senior Secondary Certificate Examination
WB	-	World Bank
WHO	-	World Health Organisation
WPAY	-	World Programme of Action for Youth
YEA	-	Youth Employment Agency

KEY POLICY DEFINITIONS

Youth:

There are various definitions of the youth at National, Regional and International levels: - The United Nations;

Youth is a person between the ages of 15 and 24 years. - World Health Organisation;

Defines an adolescent as any person between the ages of 10 and 19 and young people as individuals between ages 10 and 24 years. - The Commonwealth;

Youth is a young person between the ages of 15 and 29 years. - African Youth Charter;

Youth or young people refer to people between the ages of 15 and 35 years. - Ghana's Children's Act 1998, Act 560;

A child is a person below the age of 18 years.

However, for this policy and in line with the National Youth Authority Act 2016, Act 939, a youth is defined as a person between the ages of 15 and 35 years. The underlying principle is to harmonise these diverse definitions and respond to the socio-cultural context that creates opportunities for the holistic development of the youth. Concurrently, the term youth is used interchangeably and intended to have the same meaning as young persons.

Youth Development:

The policy shall ascribe to the description of youth development as the process of providing opportunities that support young people acquire knowledge, skills, competencies, and the right attitudes needed to realise their potential for optimum productivity through adolescence to adulthood. It is about young people becoming active members of society, contributing to national development, fostering positive relationships, and building their leadership strengths. Youth development should be well coordinated and programmed to empower the youth.

Youth Development Mainstreaming:

It is a deliberate process of integrating youth development issues into all programmes, projects, and activities across all institutions, private and public, at the National,

Local, and Community levels. It should be all-inclusive, all-embracing of needs, concerns, and requirements of youth throughout all programmes and activities during all phases of programme development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. It would be part of the development mainstreaming to integrate youth development activities into all stages of institutional and organizational development plans, and that includes public and private interventions.

Youth Empowerment:

create choices in life, are aware of the implications of those choices, make an informed decision freely, take action based on that decision and accept responsibility for the consequences for those actions. Empowering young people means creating and supporting the enabling conditions under which young people can act for themselves, and on their own terms, rather than at the direction of others". These enabling conditions include;

      i.   an economic and social base,

      ii.   political will, adequate resource allocation, and supportive legal and administrative frameworks,

      iii. a stable environment of equality, peace, and democracy,

      iv. access to knowledge, information, skills, and a positive value system.

In line with this, this policy will seek to encourage institutions and stakeholders to create an enabling environment for youth decisions and actions to be made and undertaken at freewill.

Youth Participation:

The process of actively involving young people in processes, institutions and decisions that affect their lives. It is about ensuring that young people are actively engaged and have a real influence in making decisions that affect them. Youth participation must be deliberate and conscious enough to ensure that young people are not only represented but, are contributing to real discussions, agreeing to resolutions, and taking actions leading to outcomes that benefit them and society at large. Thus, there should be no dealing with issues relating to the youth without their involvement.

Youth Organisation:

The National Youth Authority Act 2016 (Act 939) defines a youth organisation as an organisation registered by the National Youth Authority as an association to achieve the objects of the Act. Registered associations include youth-led and youth-focused organisations. Youth-led organisations are organisations formed and managed by the youth themselves, whilst the youth-focused organisations are institutions working for and in the interest of the youth. In furtherance of this, there have been actions to widen the scope. Thus, the definition of youth organisation in the context of this policy will seek to include formal or informal, registered or unregistered, private or public, with the view of educating, orienting and regularising the status of unregistered ones.

Youth Worker (or Youth Development Practitioner):

A youth worker or a youth development practitioner refers to a professionally trained person who guides and supports young people through activities that intentionally seek to positively impact their personal, social, and educational development to help them reach their full potential in society.

Youth Serving Agency (or Youth Development Agency):

A private organisation or public legal entity that drives youth-oriented activities which meet youth needs and promotes their development.

Youth Development Stakeholders:

These are the various individuals, institutions, and agencies promoting and facilitating the interest, needs, and development of young people. For the purposes of this policy, stakeholders include but are not limited to Civil and Public Servants, Community Leaders, Development Partners, the Media, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs), Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) Parents, Policy-Makers (Parliament, Ministries, Cabinet, etc.), Persons with Disability, Politicians, the Private Sector, Entrepreneurs, Religious Leaders, Traditional Leaders, Youth, Youth Leaders, Youth Workers, and Development Practitioners.

Decent Work:

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), decent work refers to, "the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves opportunities for work

that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men". This policy aligns itself to this definition put forward by the ILO.

Persons with Disabilities:

As has been adopted with appropriateness, by the Persons With Disability Act 2006, Act 715, this Policy associates itself with the United Nations (UN) definition of Persons with Disabilities, which states, "Persons with Disabilities include, those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others." However, for the purposes of proactiveness and ensuring inclusion for maximum benefit of policy interventions, the definition extends to include future dimensions of disability, as may be promulgated by national policy and/ or international protocols and conventions.

Ministry:

Ministry, as may be used unqualified, refers to the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS) as is currently applied, and its succeeding Ministry responsible for youth. This is/ will be the Ministry with overall responsibility for youth development in Ghana and this Policy document.

Vulnerable Groups:

Include youth with transient problems and marginalised young people in deprived, impoverished and hard-to-reach communities, youth with all forms of disabilities, unemployed youth, youth with mental disorders, youth in need of psychosocial support, youth in abusive situations, irregular youth migrants, homeless youth, youth adversely affected by development interventions, youth affected by disasters, among others.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ghanaian youth, like the youth in many other countries, is recognised as a strategic asset for nation-building and development. Thus, over the years, particularly, since post-independence, Ghana together with its key stakeholders and development partners, have implemented series of interventions targeted at youth empowerment, cohesion and development.

In order to strengthen coordination and effective implementation of these meaningful interventions and position the youth to contribute significantly at all levels, it is essential to develop a comprehensive and a more formalised framework to guide implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation. This led to the drafting of a more informed policy document initiated in 1999 by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. This process continued until 2009 when a substantive National Youth Policy was finalised and launched in 2010. Consequently, reviewing the existing policy to reflect current realities and strengthen institutional collaboration, cooperation and coordination, among stakeholders, for better outcomes resulted in this process of developing the 2022 – 2032 National Youth Policy document.

Cognisance of the fact that the youth are the future of the state; meaningful investment must be made by government and other stakeholders for optimum dividend to be attained. The Policy provides strategic avenues and direction for investment. It focuses on: Economic and Financial Empowerment of Young People, Youth Health and Wellbeing, Training and Development, Youth Participation and Governance, Cross-Cutting Issues and Youth Development Mainstreaming, Institutional Framework for Youth Development in Ghana; and Youth and the Future

Thus, it does not only provide ground for mainstreaming, but also, build inter and intra- organisational synergies for the purposes of strengthening young people's resilience for living in dignity, good health, peace, economic security, among others in society that respects and values inter-generational equality and justice.

The 2022-2032 National Youth Policy envisions:

"Empowered Young Generation, Creating Sustainable Opportunities for Development"

This vision, emanating from several stakeholder discussions, serves as motivation for public investment, key stakeholder planning, and design and implementation of youth interventions. It provides a central focus for all push and pull factors for the overwhelming youth to aspire in their quest to develop themselves, accept

responsibilities and desire to achieve their aspirations in a humble, just, fair, peaceful, transparent and accountable manner. The purposes of the state and other key stakeholders' responsibility for youth development is clearly encapsulated in the *"Empowered Young Generations".*

This vision is intended to be transported to its desired destination by the theme:

"Benefit for Youth Involve Youth: Together For a Prosperous Future"

The overall goal of this policy is:

"To Develop Creative and Innovative Youth Appropriately Equipped With Sense of Responsibility, Patriotism and National Pride with Advanced Technology Relevant For National and Global Dynamics"

- This goal extending from that espoused in the 2010 National Youth Policy and its achievement, embraces the future desired position of the state of Ghana regarding the youth. It also considers resource availability, technology, the future of development, and changing demographics.

- Specifically, the policy intends to achieve the following objectives:

- To promote decent job creation, employability and livelihood empowerment for the youth.

- To promote universal coverage, inclusive health service delivery, healthy lifestyles, and total wellbeing of the youth.

- To develop institutional capacities and schemes that support youth skills transfer, creativity and innovation.

- To enhance the participation of the youth in governance, community development, and decision-making and elevate their sense of civic responsibility.

- To establish an institutional framework for the coordination of youth development interventions and mainstreaming.

- To promote the fundamental human rights, and physical and reformative development of young persons, including young women and persons with disabilities, at all levels.

- To develop resilient and self-reliant youth.

- To facilitate the participation of youth in international affairs.

- To promote a quota system to enhance youth access to opportunities.

- To strengthen coordination through monitoring and evaluation of youth interventions.

The policy vision, broad goals and objectives cannot be sustained without embracing and enforcing core values that are sincerely dear to the tenets of positive and multiple beneficial results. In this regard, the 2022 – 2032 National Youth Policy will promote: **Discipline, Excellence, Honesty, Team spirit, Learning, Knowledge, Service, Selflessness and Hard Work** .

This policy is guided by the following principles:

- The Government of Ghana recognises that sustainable development requires constantly improved human capital.

- The Government of Ghana is aware that a well-disciplined and skilled youth is an asset for national development.

- Since the youth of today are leaders of tomorrow, the state has the absolute obligation to equip them with the knowledge, skills, competence and leadership required to meet the development challenges of tomorrow.

- That effective interventions are a Shared Responsibility of all stakeholders, that the youth, the prime beneficiaries of the policy must take maximum responsibility and interest in their success and totally support full implementation of interventions.

- Globally, all countries are turning to the development of youth as a catalyst to sustain their development. Ghana cannot be left out of this global phenomenon.

The core principles are: *Gender equality; 'For ALL Ghanaian youth everywhere'; Holistic, Competency and Transparency; "Nothing for youth without youth"; Alignment with other national and international policies; Outcomes and Results-focused; Positive youth development; Youth development mainstreaming; Resource mobilisation and usage; Data-driven interventions; Collective responsibility and ownership; Continuity and persistence.*

In line with the multi-sectoral approach to implementation, it is required that all state and non-state actors, public and private, marshal their resources to carry-out activities towards achieving the desired outcomes. They will be guided by the Implementation Plan with full commitment, collaboration, partnership, and

goodwill. The Ministry of Youth and Sports through the National Youth Authority (NYA) is responsible for coordinating implementation by all actors. Resources for the implementation will be mobilised locally and internationally from the public and private sectors, with emphasis on the use of local materials for interventions to minimise cost.

The Ministry in collaboration with NYA and all stakeholders, will institutionalise a robust Monitoring and Evaluation system linked with the National M&E framework to track progress and disseminate results periodically. A communication strategy will also be implemented in the course of the policy implementation to sustain the interest and commitment of all actors.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.0 Introduction

1. The Ghanaian youth, like the youth in many other countries, is recognised as a strategic asset for nation-building and development. Thus, over the years, particularly, since post-independence, Ghana together with its key stakeholders and development partners, have implemented a series of interventions targeted at youth cohesion and development. A comprehensive narrative of some of these policies and programmes are incorporated in this chapter. In reviewing and developing renewed policy actions through extensive consultations, the purpose for the review and the rationale for the new actions as captioned in this chapter seek to support implementation of the new Policy from 2022 – 2032 with the socio-cultural and economic context of the youth at the International, National and Sub-National levels being holistically considered and summarised.

2. To achieve maximum outcomes with efficient use of resources, the variance in terms of youth status and diverse needs have been strategically categorised and are expected to inform policy and programme decisions from conception, through implementation to evaluation.

1.2 Background

3. The potential of the youth to contribute to national development and the need to harness that potential has been recognised by the Government of Ghana since independence. Thus, several interventions were initiated and implemented, mostly on, an ad hoc basis and quite spontaneous, in response to emerging youth challenges in relation to socio-cultural, economic and political trends. This situation, especially during the immediate post-independence era, could be understood as the newly formed state needed to immediately galvanise its human resource, particularly the youth, to assume responsible roles for the acceleration of development.

4. In this regard, the Government of the First Republic sought to orient the youth to become disciplined, patriotic and encouraged them to acquire leadership skills that would enable them to play active roles in the socio-economic

endeavours of the country. For effective implementation, the Workers' Brigade and Ghana Young Pioneers initiatives were formed, with the latter having cohorts as, **™African Personality, the Young Pioneers, the Kwame Nkrumah Youth and the Young Party League .** The Workers' Brigade contributed significantly to youth employment and agriculture production that provided inputs for the established industries and factories. On the other hand, the African Personality and the Young Party Leagues succeeded in grooming patriotic and disciplined youth needed to foster and promote leadership for nation-building. As the euphoria of independence began to wane, the ability to sustain efforts declined, giving way to apathy and negative perceptions.

5. Nonetheless, the Second Republic initiated in 1969, was faced with the reality of an indisciplined youth emanating from the abandonment of the previous initiatives. Thus, the National Service Corps was introduced. It was also meant to reduce the high incidence of unemployment in the country (Akyea, 1970a, cited in Tagoe & Oheneba-Sakyi, 2015). The Service in collaboration with the Voluntary Work Camps Association and the Ghana Youth Council implemented a number of construction and farming projects to create jobs for the youth. To further strengthen and provide an institutional framework for the coordination of youth programmes and policies, the Ministry for Youth and Rural Development was established alongside an implementing institution; the Department of Youth Services. The Department was to supervise all youth programmes and spearhead participation of the youth in rural development and national reconstruction initiatives.

6. The Centre for Civic Education was also established with the mandate of providing civic education to the populace where many young persons were trained to conduct mass education across the country. Besides the promotion of the rural development programme, the National Civic Education Programme provided employment opportunities to the youth. These laudable initiatives though significantly successful, in their purpose, were met with challenges such as those extrapolated by the Legon Observer, 1971 and Abbey & Brew, 1970, both cited in Tagoe & Oheneba-Sakyi, 2015:

☐ The establishment of the National Service Corps (NSC) which was intended to provide for employment, turned out to be an instrument of rural development, an agency for mobilising local people for community development.

☐ The NSC was a duplication of the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development, offering a scope for the exercise of private

and political patronage.

☐ The absence of detailed figures on employment levels and reliable data from official sources made attempts to deal with the problem very difficult.

7. In the 1970s, the National Service Corps was disbanded and the Ghana Youth Council (GYC) re-organised into the National Youth Council (NYC) with accompanying legal backing of National Redemption Council Decree 1974 (NRCD 241).

8. Following the promulgation of National Redemption Council (NRC) Decree 208 the National Service Secretariat and the National Service Scheme were established. In line with the Decree, young Ghanaian graduates from Tertiary institutions and Sixth Form were obliged to undertake a one-year service in identified areas of national development. This was replaced in 1980 with the Ghana Service Scheme Act,1980 (Act 426), increasing the duration of national service to two years and a minimum of six months of military training. 9. Furthermore, to reinforce the contribution of the youth to national development, the National Reconstruction Corps was instituted and became instrumental in the implementation of farming projects under the "Operation Feed Yourself" initiative.

10. Following the incidence of the revolution in the 1980s, attempts were made to drastically review and give push to youth programmes and policies in line with the ideals of the revolution. This led to the establishment of the National Youth Organising Commission (NYOC) with the mandate, among others, to organise a monolithic mass national youth movement. Thus, the Democratic Youth League of Ghana (DYLG) was formed to carry out the objectives of the 31st December Revolution.

11. When Ghana experienced the Nigerian Deportation Order of her citizens, together with national bushfires catastrophe, leading to severe famine and poverty, the National Mobilisation Programme was established to reintegrate the returnees, mobilise the youth and engage them in community development programmes.

12. As youth interventions were ad hoc and were not properly coordinated, it became essential to develop a comprehensive and a more formalised framework to guide implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of youth activities and programmes. This led to the drafting of a more informed policy document in 1999 by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. This

process continued until 2009 when a substantive National Youth Policy was finalised and launched in 2010. This was followed by an implementation plan developed in 2014. The Policy provided for at least a five-year review cycle.

13.   Consequently, reviewing the existing policy to reflect current realities and strengthen institutional collaboration, cooperation and coordination, among stakeholders, for better outcomes resulted in this process. The output is this 2022 – 2032 National Youth Policy document.

1.2 Rationale

14.   The youth, constituting close to 36 percent of the total population of Ghana, require consciously formalised coordinated effort to ensure quality improvement in their lives to enable them contribute meaningfully to development. Their participation in all sectors of life can no longer be treated ordinarily but, as a standard of democratic and demographic rights and require a mechanism for ensuring integration. This Policy provides the required framework, comprehensively designed to respond to the need to effectively coordinate implementation of all programmes and activities affecting the youth. Cognisance of the fact that the youth is the future of the State; meaningful investment must be made by government and other stakeholders for optimum dividend to be attained. The Policy provides strategic avenues and direction for investment.

15.   Article 12 of the African Youth Charter enjoins all Member States to develop a comprehensive and coherent Youth Policy, taking into consideration the inter-relatedness of the challenges facing young people across sectors. This Policy fulfils the African Youth Charter obligation conferred on Member States. It also addresses protocols, conventions, and other concerns at all levels.

1.3 Purpose of the Policy

16.   The National Youth Policy is intended to provide framework and direction for all stakeholders involved in the implementation of policies, programmes and projects for the development of the youth. It is also a tool for effective and efficient coordination and utilisation of resources for the optimum benefit of the youth and their contribution to national development. Thus, it does not only provide ground for mainstreaming, but also, build inter and intra-organisational synergies for the purposes of strengthening young people's resilience for living in dignity, good health, peace, economic security, among

others in society that respects and values inter-generational equality and justice.

1.4 Situational Analysis

17. The issues affecting the development of the youth in Ghana emerge from different spheres of the life. It includes, but not limited to national, regional, international, global and even at community and/ or individual levels. In order to address these issues, it is imperative to analyse the various dimensions of the situation and identify the primary concerns for appropriate policy action.

18. The analysis of the situation is generated by Issues Survey, Youth Development Research, Consultations, Policy Changes, Review of Protocols and Conventions, Development Partners (DPs) Term Papers and emerging Global Trends (pandemics, technology, climate change, population dynamics, aspirations, etc.). This analysis, which is supported by comprehensive desk reviews, expert discussions and inferences of good practice, are consolidated with the SWOT Analysis discussed in the text below:

1.4.1 Economic and Financial Empowerment of Young People

19. Building the economic empowerment of young people does not happen in isolation. It requires significant financial support for income generation, employment, general entrepreneurship, and the acquisition of requisite logistics, equipment and other relevant tools.

1.4.1.1 Youth Entrepreneurship and Financial Inclusion

20. Entrepreneurship is proven to provide a platform for softening the absolute burden of youth employment on Government. It seeks to encourage the attitude of, "thinking outside the box" in the creation of alternative employment and livelihood for the youth. Economies around the world envision strong and vibrant businesses, Governments and entrepreneurs being driven by changing technologies, innovation, and work processes, which require the public and private sectors together with key stakeholders to realise and encourage the inter-connectivity between entrepreneurship and innovation in driving contemporary economies and financial resources as enabler.

21. This is largely propagated to continue for a long while and countries are

expected to adapt to this new trend in order to stay competitive and productive. The key to Ghana's strength to stay afloat is entrepreneurship. Fortunately, Ghana is blessed with a teeming youth population, briskly poised for entrepreneurship.

22.   However, youth in Ghana are confronted with the issues of high interest rates on small business loans, collateral requirements, limited financial information, and access to relevant job opportunities. This issue coupled with the high cost of production, makes it difficult for young people willing to start their own enterprises to succeed.

23.   Over the years, Government has attempted to mitigate the effect of these financial exclusion issues through the implementation of youth development entrepreneurship programmes. Policy interventions such as the reservation of 30 percent of public procurement contracts for youth and Persons with Disabilities, the Microfinance and Small Loans Schemes, the National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (NEIP), the Rural Enterprises Project, Planting for Food and Jobs, Youth in Agriculture Programme, among others are laudable government initiatives towards promoting youth entrepreneurship. In order to reinforce Government effort and provide for coordination, institutions such as the Ghana Enterprises Agency (GEA), Microfinance and Small Loans Centre (MASLOC), Ghana Investment Promotion Authority (GIPA) and the Youth Employment Agency (YEA) were established.

24.   Despite the good intentions of these interventions, they have not reflected adequately in the ability of the youth to attain a substantial level of entrepreneurship development since access to capital, financial literacy, managerial skills, access to market, perceived unfair competition, dumping and high cost of doing business still persist as disincentive to the growth of youth enterprises.

1.4.1.2 Youth Employment and Labour Issues

25.   The youth of Ghana, aspire to gain decent employment with attractive working conditions and remuneration to enable them to live prosperous and fulfilling lives. They also require a good working environment that guarantees security and welfare. This is the mentality with which they enter into the labour market and it is important to have such expected conditions at the work place in order to promote their well-being and development.

26.   However, studies indicate that most jobs in Ghana are low-skill, requiring

limited cognitive skills and technological content. This in turn translates into low earnings and less decent labour practices (World Bank, 2020). In the light of Espacios (2017), the lack of work experience is frequently used as excuse for refusing to employ new graduates; limited labour market information, the desire of the youth to work within their speciality, and high salary expectation hinder access to job opportunities. Yet, our review points to unfair termination of appointments, discrimination in employment, loss of jobs, unfair labour practices, unresolved labour issues involving young people are some of the challenges the youth continue to face as job seekers or as employees.

27.   Despite the significant expansion of the national economy since 1992, a significant percentage of youth continue to face prolonged unemployment. According to the 2019 Ghana Living Standards Survey 7 (GLSS7) Report, the unemployment rate for the population aged 15-35 years is 12.6 percent and the rate is higher among females 13.8 percent than males 11.4 percent. In terms of geographical locations, Greater Accra recorded the highest unemployment rate of 17.6 percent and the lowest of 8.6 percent by the Northern Region. It is observed that the female unemployment rate is higher than for males in all regions except Greater Accra 19.1 percent male, 16.3 percent female, and Upper East 11.2 percent male, 10.7 percent female.

28.   The unemployment rate for the population aged 15-24 years (United Nations definition of youth) is 18.5 percent compared to 8.7 percent for those aged 25-35 years. Similar to the population aged 15-35 years, the rate is higher among females, 19.1 percent than males 17.9 percent. Irrespective of sex, the unemployment rate among the population 15-24 years is higher than that of the population 15-35 years in all the regions. It is observed that the unemployment rate among the population aged 15-24 years is quite high in Ashanti (30.8 percent), Greater Accra (30.2 percent) and Western (18.5 percent) regions.

29.   Like many African countries, Ghana's current youth unemployment status and its interlinking labour market issues points negatively towards youth job-seeking, sustenance and progression. Considering the demographic structure of Ghana's population, the situation of youth employment and the negative tendencies relating to labour issues do not seem to synchronise investment.

1.4.1.3 Hunger and Poverty

30.   It is the responsibility of every government to ensure that national resources

and particularly the economy are well managed such that the basic necessities of life such as food, clothing and shelter are guaranteed for the citizenry. However, in Ghana, the problem of hunger and poverty exists at different levels for different people in different areas of the country. According to the United Nations, extreme hunger and malnutrition remain a barrier to sustainable development and creates a trap from which people cannot easily escape. Hunger and malnutrition mean less productive individuals, who are more prone to disease and thus often unable to earn more and improve their livelihoods. Like, many countries in Africa, hunger and poverty are major developmental challenges indices facing the youth.

31. As a chunk of the youth are relatively unemployed, they are unable to fend for themselves in terms of providing decent meals. Many of the youth are dependants and therefore unable to determine their feeding levels and, in most situations live, work and sleep in hunger. In search of jobs, significant number of the youth migrate to urban and city centres and are worse confronted with limited or inaccessibility of food. The challenge is, whilst their counterparts in rural communities may be able to depend on family relations for food, those in the urban and city centres lack such family support. The situation is even worse for homeless and street youth.

32. According to the Ghana Voluntary National Review Report on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2019), the proportion of Ghanaians living below the international poverty line declined from 13.6 percent in 2013 to 11.9 percent in 2017. The proportion of Ghanaians classified as poor based on national definition reduced from 24.2 percent in 2013 to 23.4 percent in 2017. The incidence of poverty is higher among the rural population.

33. It can therefore be deduced that the data exhibited is all-encompassing in terms of the demographic characteristics of the country and therefore includes the youth. As the youth consistently constitute one third of the population, it is convincing, supported by our reviews, which a significant number of the youth are below the poverty line as espoused.

1.4.1.4 Youth and Agriculture

34. The agriculture sector has the potential to boost the creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship of the youth. It is capable of enhancing the expansion of other sectors of the economy through the value chain. It will create decent

employment opportunities, wealth, and address the issue of high incidence of youth migration.

35.   Ghana has a large expanse of arable land that can adequately support the cultivation of various crops and provide sufficient opportunities for agricultural value chain development. There is a comparative advantage in undertaking farming or agricultural ventures. However, the acreage of land under cultivation is relatively very low with difficulties associated with farmland acquisition. This situation limits land engagement and backtracks progress in Ghana's quest to creat jobs through agriculture: ***"Planting for Food and Jobs"***. The phenomenon largely affects youth involvement in the agriculture value system.

36.   According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2017/2018 Ghana Census of Agriculture National Report), the total youth population engaged in agriculture was estimated at 902,174 with 31.3 percent and 24.3 percent in the rural and urban areas respectively. The data revealed that 66.7 percent of the youth engaged in agriculture are males. Additionally, the data projects that 3 in 10 persons engaged in agriculture are youth. It can be deduced that an estimated 70 percent of people engaged in agriculture in Ghana are beyond the youth age bracket.

37.   Our review reveals that the disinterest of youth in agriculture stems from stringent land tenure system, tedious farming methods, limited investment in agriculture, limited information on opportunities in the agribusiness value chain, perceived risks outweighing returns, limited social amenities in farming communities, poor recognition of agriculture as a dignified profession.

38.   If this trend is reversed, agriculture will play the expected role in creating employment and contributing significantly to the improvement of food security in Ghana.

1.4.1.5 Youth Migration and Mobility

39.   Generally, the movement of people from one point to the other in search of opportunities and for other social needs is not necessarily an issue. However, when the movement, and in this case migration, becomes rampant, ill-informed and injurious to persons, society and the generality of human development and habitation, it turns problematic.

40.   Over the years, the migration of young people from rural to urban areas and

transnational migration has been unbearably high in view of its implications for development. The factors associated with this phenomenon are diverse; including political, economic, social, and environmental. Forces such as conflicts, hunger, poverty, disasters, drought, education, limited essential amenities and rapid urbanisation contribute significantly to youth migration. As the conditions of areas of origin begin to experience these adversarial effects, youth livelihoods are threatened and migration increasingly becomes eminent.

41.   These young migrants are often faced with abuse, poverty, and vulnerability in their new settlements. They mostly live in slum areas with poor conditions, are involved in indecent jobs and are confronted with high adverse consequences such as rape, diseases, unplanned pregnancies, crime and incarceration, drugs and substance abuse, stereotyping, victimisation and profiling.

42.   The policies of succeeding governments implemented for rural development, macro-economic growth, infrastructure expansion and the regulations of national labour migration could have immense impact but has not adequately addressed youth migration as expected.

1.4.1.6 Youth and Environmental Sustainability

43.   Human activities, such as the use of fossil fuel, deforestation, construction, unsustainable agricultural practices, and mining contribute to environmental degradation leading to climate change. These have negative implications for availability of water, food security, and ecosystem sustainability. The consequences associated with these characterise the issues militating against youth development and are of concern for policy interventions.

44.   Currently, over 40% of the world's population suffer from drying soils, water insecurity, and other adverse impacts of ecosystem degradation (Tim Christophersen - UN Decade Ecosystem Restoration, 2021).

45.   Land degradation and illegal mining that mostly involve the youth does not only destroy arable lands and denies the youth access to farm lands for productive purposes but also, particularly illegal mining inflict diseases, life threatening injuries, deaths, delinquencies, educational drop-outs, drug and substance abuses and trafficking.

46.   Environmental degradation, could also result from the destruction of the forest, water bodies, vegetative cover, prolonged drought and, poorly managed

construction. These activities mostly involve the youth as perpetrators and have negative consequences on places for recreation and congregation, employment, promotion of tourism, and other livelihoods.

47.   Negative environmental sustainability practices have a direct and indirect impact on the cost of production especially on industries as the cost of raw materials increases because of scarcity and contamination. This in turn affects the level of industrial employment and dwindle entrepreneurship development for which the youth are the major losers.

48.   Thus, environmental sustainability is not only a concern for the youth but also a necessary ingredient for sustainable livelihoods.

1.4.2 Youth Health and Wellbeing

49.   The health and wellbeing of the youth is essential for their growth and development. Thus, the health status of the youth impacts directly on their contribution to productivity. Very recently, health issues such as HIV and AIDS, sexual and reproductive health, nutrition, mental health, sports, leisure and recreation of the youth has become a major concern for development. While some of these conditions occur naturally, others are a function of lifestyle behaviours.

1.4.2.1 HIV and AIDS

50.   Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) among Ghanaian youth remain a major public health concern. In 2020, the estimated number of young people living with HIV aged between 15-24 years was 42,016 representing 12.1 percent of the total HIV population in the country. Young people in this age group continue to account for 1 in 4 new infections annually since 2016. Adolescent girls and young women are disproportionately affected by HIV as they account for 83 percent of all new infections in this age group (Ghana AIDs Commission, 2020).

51.   AIDS is one of the largest contributors to youth mortality in Ghana (IHME, 2018). The youth are particularly vulnerable to HIV infections because they are sexually active and often engage in unprotected sex with multiple partners. The practice of multiple sexual partnerships among young people aged 15-24 years increased steadily among young women, from 1.4 percent in 2008 to 2.5 percent in 2017, while it remained unchanged (6 percent) among young

men during the same period. At the same time, condom use marginally increased from 28.2 percent to 29.3 percent among young women while it declines sharply among young men from 46.4 percent to 32.6 percent.

52.   These high-risk sexual behaviours are fuelled by low knowledge of HIV prevention and high stigma and discrimination against persons living or affected by HIV. Comprehensive knowledge of HIV preventive methods declined from 28.3 percent in 2008 to 17 percent in 2017 among young women and from 34.2 percent to 20 percent among their male counterparts in the same period. Accepting attitudes towards Persons living with HIV remained significantly low over the last decade, HIV testing behaviour among the youth is significantly low and shows declining trends in both males and females; from 13.4 percent to 11 percent among women and from 8.2 percent to 3 percent among men respectively.

53.   It is therefore important to implement measures that support information sharing on HIV/AIDS, early diagnoses and treatment, particularly for pregnant women in order to contain the spread of the disease and curtail its impact on the youth.

1.4.2.2 Substance Abuse

54.   The use of substances such as drugs, alcohol, tobacco and others are commonly associated with the youth as they perceive these substances as inspiration for boosting their energies and pride. Most of these young people get into substance abuse through peer pressure, curiosity, or post-traumatic addiction. However, they often continue the practice for various physical and psychological gratifications including euphoria, attentiveness, high energy levels, pain relief, and improved sexual performance (Abdul-Ganiyu *et al*, 2019). At the high level, as they become more and more addicted, they begin to diversify their interest and taste, which then leads them to more complicated and harder substances such as tramadol, heroin, cocaine, weed (Indian Hemp/marijuana) and a couple of concoctions. This phenomenon is disastrous for the youth and therefore a significant issue for policy consideration.

55.   The National Health Policy (2017), observed that tobacco use among Junior High School students decreased from 4.8 percent in 2000 to 2.8 percent in 2017 with the introduction of a new form of substance, notably 'Shisha'. Shisha, which was previously unknown in Ghana, is currently being used by

an estimated 1.3 percent of Junior High School students. Besides alcohol, shisha and others, another trending substance that is being abused among the youth is the non-medical use of Tramadol; a prescription synthetic opioid used for pain relief, which also produces effects similar to the "high" of heroin.

56.   Substance abuse among the youth is a serious challenge that can divert the focus of the youth to anti-social and unproductive behaviour thereby eroding the opportunity for Government to harness the potentials of the youth bulge for national development. There is the need to sustain the gains made and to introduce new measures to address this emerging trend.

1.4.2.3 Mental Health

57.   Mental health care is often one of the lowest health priorities for low income countries and Ghana is no exception (WHO, 2001). In March 2012, the Mental Health Act, 2012 (Act 846) was passed to facilitate access to treatment and the coordination of mental health services. However, mental health in Ghana continues to pose a challenge, as there is little evidence of any implementation of the Act, except for the establishment of the Mental Health Authority. Evidence suggests complete unavailability of essential mental health medications, leaving 98 per cent of patients untreated (MOH, 2016).

58.   Act 846 also stipulates that mental health facilities will be established at the door steps of communities. However, the situation on the ground does not fully attest to the availability of these facilities as required. Yet, issues of mental health, especially among youth, continue to increase particularly, the increase in attempted suicide and suicidal cases. In addition, the shortage of trained professionals to support the mental health system, stigmatization of youth with mental illnesses, and social exclusion are some of the critical challenges that needs to be addressed.

59.   Indeed, in countries such as Ghana, many of those in need of treatment do not reach psychiatric services at all, but seek the care of informal community mental health services (WHO, 2003) and such informal community health services as traditional and faith healers and family members who offer varying quality of service and level of efficacy (Ofori-Atta *et al*, 2010). It is important to note that, a formidable mental health system critical to supporting youth who become mentally ill to be rehabilitated in order to bounce back into mainstream society and contribute to development is insufficient.

1.4.2.4 Sexual and Reproductive Health

60.   Unsafe sexual behaviours are common among the youth making them vulnerable to the risk of unplanned pregnancies or sexually transmitted infections including HIV. It is estimated that 14 per cent of adolescents aged 15 – 19 are already mothers or pregnant with their first child and the direct and indirect cost of HIV on the lives of individuals and the population is significant.

61.   The level of awareness among the youth in reproductive services such as family planning, fertility services, HIV transmission and management, reproductive tract infections, cervical cancer and other gynaecological morbidities, though intensive have not been yielding desired results, especially among the youth.

62.   According to the UNFPA (2019), Ghana's contraceptive prevalence rate is 33 per cent among sexually active people. Meanwhile, evidence suggests that the median age at first sexual intercourse among young women (20-24 years) increased marginally from 16.9 years in 1993 to 18.5 years in 2008 and 18.4 years in 2014. In addition, the national incidence of child (below 18 years old) marriage is estimated at 23.6 percent compared to 27.7 percent for persons aged 18- 49 years and 20.7 percent for women aged 20-24 years.

63.   These dynamics have negative implications for youth development and progress as their engagement in early reproductive ventures curtails their advancement in education, career development, and general health and wellbeing.

1.4.2.5 Nutrition

64.   Food is very essential for the provision of energy (calories), nutrients, vitamins and other important elements for human sustenance and survival. For a healthy life, the body needs the right food with the appropriate nutrients at the right time in the right quantities. The youthful age is the period for relatively rapid growth and changes in the physiology and this process must be consciously attended to by eating well in order to stay healthy. In Ghana's situation, nutritional intake does not in most cases synchronise with the levels of requirement due to several factors including poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, and early parenting.

65.   The high unemployment rate among the youth implies that they may largely depend on families, friends and other benefactors for feeding. This

dependency limits their choices of the type of food, the quality of food, and the quantity of food. Thus, they eat what they get rather than what they require. Additionally, work pressures and other lifestyles compel many young people to eat at wrong times or eat unhealthy food. This phenomenon makes them susceptible to all the dangers associated with poor nutrition and unhealthy living. The results have been the experiences of young people in diseases such as hypertension, cancer, diabetes and others which were hitherto considered as diseases of the aged and the affluent.

66.   This situation is compounded by the apathy of the youth towards traditional foods as they perceive them as archaic, tedious to cook and unpresentable. Meanwhile, the local or traditional foods have been found to be more nutritious and of high value in supporting healthy growth and boosting the immune system.

67.   According to the Ghana Statistical Service and others (2015), ''Teen Youth'' living in rural areas are more likely to be underweight than those in urban areas, and those born to mothers with little or no education are substantially more likely to be underweight than children of more educated women. Child bearing begins early for some young people in Ghana. In 2014, 36.1 percent of adolescents had begun child bearing by age 19 (GSS *et al*, 2015). This has serious consequences because, relative to older mothers, adolescent girls are more likely to be malnourished and have low birth-weight babies, who are more likely to become malnourished and be at increased risk of illness and death than those born to older mothers (GSS *et al*, 2015).

68.   The various interventions undertaken by stakeholders in the area of integrating and mainstreaming of nutrition into general health services are laudable but still require intensification.

1.4.2.6 Sports, Leisure and Recreation

70.   Sports is recognised as an important instrument for nation-building and cohesion. Therefore, its organization, development and promotion has been given prominence in Ghana. Article 37 clause 5 of the 1992 Constitution of the republic of Ghana seeks to ensure that adequate facilities for sports are provided throughout the country and that sports are promoted as a means of fostering national integration, health and discipline. The clause also envisions the use of sports as a means of promoting international friendship and understanding.

71.   Sports and recreation are considered essential activities for individuals of all ages, and play an important role in all societies. Sport does not only promote physical activity; it teaches important life skills and lessons to youth (Danish et al., 2004). Engagement in sport programmes and initiatives provides youth with opportunities to be physically active – thereby improving their physical health – as well as contributing to youth psychosocial development by providing opportunities to learn important life skills such as cooperation, discipline, leadership and self-control.

72.   Furthermore, physical activity habits developed during childhood and adolescence are associated with physical activity habits in adulthood, meaning an active youth population can translate into a healthier adult population (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005). All this combined makes sports and recreational activities favourable options for development actors and policy-makers to consider in fostering positive youth development.

73.   Positive Youth Development (PYD) in connection to sports and recreation refers to the ways in which youth 'may accrue optimal developmental experiences through their involvement in organised activities' (Holt and Neely, 2011). Sports and recreation can foster PYD in various ways. Scholars have found that various leisure activities have the ability to promote physical, psychological, emotional, social and intellectual development in youth populations (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005). For instance, sports and recreation can combat obesity and related diseases; increase self-esteem and decrease stress; promote peer relations and leadership skills, and foster increased participation in academic endeavours (ibid.).

74.   It has been documented that sports participation not only reduces the tendency among youth to engage in negative social behaviours and is connected to lower rates of drug use, depression and incidence of suicidal behaviour, but also is linked to increased likelihood of attending tertiary education institutions, achieving independence, and obtaining satisfactory employment (Zarrett et al., 2008).

75.   Today, a number of higher education institutions in Ghana offer courses and programmes in both the theory and the practice of sport, allowing young people to further pursue interest in sport as a career. In essence, sport provides opportunities to foster PYD in many ways and should therefore be considered an important topic of focus in youth development policies.

76.   In the recent past, sports have changed very much in contrast to previous

decades. It is seen as a business and a veritable tool for the development and promotion of peace. A significant economic force that provides employment, reduces poverty, improves health and fitness, and bridges cultural and economic barriers. ''Sports has the power to change the world, it has the power to inspire and unite people in the way that little else does''. It is one of the tools that is capable of facilitating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly, Goals 3, 4, 5, 11, 16, and 17.

77. This laudable opportunity should be made available and accessible to the youth for not just leisure but for employment creation throughout the sports value chain. Meanwhile, in many communities around Ghana, interest of youth in sports is evidently high but the facilities to support their efforts are mostly unavailable.

78. Leisure and recreation refresh the mind and builds healthy body. It is therefore necessary to provide essential avenues for which the youth will have leisure and recreation. However, the current situation is that places of leisure and recreation are limited, with many communities being affected. As the saying goes ''the devil finds work for idle hands'', the youth unfortunately get engaged in negative vices.

1.4.3 Training and Development

79. Nations have transformed to their present state by deliberately providing information and instructions to their citizens to enhance knowledge and skills application towards progress. Throughout the world, the responsibility of nation building rests with the people, particularly the youth. This is so especially for Ghana, which has a majority youthful population. In order to build capacity to effectively undertake development, there is the need to comprehensively train and develop the youth to acquire the necessary market-oriented skills, knowledge and competencies to successfully execute and bring about the needed development outcomes.

1.4.3.1 Education and Skills Training

80. The quality of human resource in any society has a direct correlation with its socio-economic development. Thus, education and skills training of young people is an investment for the development and progress of Ghana. The training and generally, education must be focused not only on quantity but also, quality, providing hands-on experiences. However, the situation in

Ghana suggests otherwise. The quality of skills is low partly because of poor infrastructure, inadequate teaching equipment and learning aids; large class sizes with insufficient number of teachers, poor motivation of teachers and inadequate supervision. Additionally, the number of schools and institutions in Ghana that provide vocational and technical training is extremely low compared to those providing mind-oriented programmes (the Humanities).

81.   The over-emphasis on humanities as against science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) suggests a deviation from current development trends, as this seems a mismatch between education or training and the needs of industry. Additionally, curriculum and educational planning do not seem to involve industrial perspectives. Thus, the product lacks the kind of skills and competencies needed to stimulate the type of growth and development envisaged.

82.   Our review points to the fact that significant number of the youth possess high level of qualifications in general knowledge, especially in the humanities and business-related programmes. They hold certificates spanning from Higher National Diplomas (HND), First Degrees through to Doctoral Degrees (PhDs). However, most of these qualifications, though significant and essential, are not able to attract the desired employment. Thus, many of these degree holders are still found walking around and highly dependent on relations and benefactors for their livelihoods. Although interest of the youth in technical and vocational training is growing, it still lags behind that of the social sciences and the other humanities.

83.   Currently, a number of youth who have dropped out of school but still have interest in learning vocation or trade for a living are unable to have access to the institutions or in some cases these institutions are unavailable. The informal sector that could support the formal sector in delivering these services are ill-structured or in some cases expensive for the reach of these dropped-outs.

84.   One of the important phenomena that has drawn attention in the review has been youth in correctional centres, youth in prisons, young ex-detainees, and youth in mental health facilities. This category of youth has a large population desirous of continuing their education or reconnecting to society by building their skills and vocation whilst in detention. There have been efforts by some of them to access the formal systems by undertaking national examinations such as the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and West Africa Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE). Some of these young

inmates have done very well in these examinations and are determined to further their education. Even though the correctional centres and the prisons have vocational and skills training facilities for occupational and rehabilitation therapy, they are seriously under resourced.

85.   Another important group of youth is those who are in homeless and street situations. This group, mostly in distress situations, mainly think of survival and thus, relegate matters related to training or skills development. Their situation is more compounded by the absence of conscious interventions to provide vocational and technical training infrastructure and services to them.

86.   In all these dimensions, female interest and involvement in technical and vocational training lag behind that of their male counterparts and thus, remains a challenge. The lack of start-up capital for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) graduates is also problematic.

87.   In an attempt to contribute to filling this gap, the National Youth Authority has established Youth Leadership Training Institutes across the country. However, these institutions are under resourced.

1.4.3.2 Information and Communications Technology

88.   Globally, advancement in technology is a driving force for socio-economic growth and development. Information and communications technology (ICT) is essential for transforming societies. Government of Ghana and major stakeholders are therefore taking advantage of the transformative power of ICT to enhance service delivery in both the public and private sectors.

89.   In the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, technology and innovation provide many opportunities for youth, including Persons with Disabilities who have become technologically savvy. They adapt quickly and are generally quite hungry to know and learn new trends and skills. However, the application of these skills by the youth leaves much to be desired, since some of them are indulging in cyber-crimes and bullying. The anonymity of users and the highly unregulated connectivity and information give rise to a loss of cultural values, misconduct and ICT addiction.

90.   Issues of Artificial Intelligence (AI), programming, coding and robotics exposure among the youth are yet to be seriously exploited to support national development. Government efforts to promote ICT access by all communities through Ghana Investment Fund for Electronic Communications (GIFEC) are

laudable. However, cost, accessibility, unreliability and unavailability of connectivity of internet services remain a great challenge, particularly for Persons with Disabilities.

1.4.4 Youth Participation and Governance

91. Generally, the principle of social inclusion dictates that all sectors of society and individuals are meaningfully engaged in the socio-economic development of the country. The participation of the youth in national issues needs to be mainstreamed in all interventions at any level and at any stage of the development process. The democratic credentials of Ghana can be sustained when the enabling environment is created for youth voluntary involvement in national issues such as elections and occupation of leadership, the development and implementation of national strategies, the resolution of conflict and peace-building among others. The participation of the youth in governance should not only be considered a moral and a legal requirement, but an instrument for growth and progress of the State.

1.4.4.1 Active Citizenship and Participation in Governance

92. The World Programme of Action for Youth adopted by the UN General Assembly in the year 2000 calls for the advancement of youth agenda in matters of governance. Consequently, governments of Member States and their key partners have expressed commitment to ensuring youth participation in governance, politics and other developmental processes. Following this development, the Commonwealth, the African Union and all other regional bodies, as well as, States have taken proactive actions for the realisation of this agenda. The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (2006 – 2015), the African Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (2019 – 2023) and the establishment of the National Youth Authority in Ghana under the National Youth Authority Act 2016, Act 939 are but a few concrete actions taken to ensure the participation of youth in all spheres of national and international affairs.

102. Notwithstanding these actions, the participation of the youth in governance and other decision-making processes is yet to be fully attained as they have been left out in many aspects of democratic governance. In Ghana, the elections and appointment of the youth in the governance process and decision-making processes is still limited. The recent 2020 general elections and the appointment of Ministers and Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief

Executives, Boards and Chief Executive Officers of State-Owned Institutions still connote minimum involvement of the youth in the governance process.

93. Additionally, the access of the youth to institutional systems and structures of governance in order to enhance their effective participation in public policy and platforms to address their needs is also problematic. For the youth to make informed decisions and participate fully in governance and other decision making processes, there must be free flow of accurate and reliable information. However, this is lacking in many circumstances and in a few cases, the information provided is asymmetrical.

94. The apparent loss of information and exclusion of the youth in these developmental processes, encourages the imposition of policies, programmes, and projects on the youth which often results in negative outcomes.

95. The major challenges and barriers include:

- Politicisation of youth development structures

- Biased accountability

- Exclusion of a portion of the youth population due to language barrier

- Age exclusion (age is repository of wisdom)

- Cost

- High expectation of base knowledge (perceived inexperience)

- Weak engagement structures and methodology

96. Our review, strongly aligns the issues of youth active citizenship and participation in governance with the advocacy of the African Youth Charter as the need to:

- Ensure that every young person participates in all spheres of society.

- Promote active youth participation in society.

- Guarantee the participation of youth in every decision making body, in accordance with the prescribed laws.

- Facilitate the creation or strengthening of platforms for youth participation in decision making at local, national, regional and continental levels of governance.

- Ensure equal access to young men and women to participate in decision making and in fulfilling civic duties.

- Give priority to policies and programmes including youth advocacy and peer-to-peer programmes for marginalised youth, such as out-of-school and out-of-work youth, to offer them the opportunity and motivation to reintegrate into mainstream society.

- Provide access to information such that young people become aware of their right and opportunities to participate in decision-making and civic life.

- Institute measures to professionalise youth work and introduce relevant training programmes in higher education and other such training institutions.

- Provide technical and financial support to build the institutional capacity of youth organisations.

- Institute policies and programmes of youth volunteerism at local, national, regional and international levels as an important form of youth participation and as a means of peer-to-peer training.

- Provide access to information and services that will empower youth to become aware of their rights and responsibilities.

- Include youth representatives as part of delegations to ordinary sessions and other relevant meetings to broaden channels of communication and enhance the discussion of youth-related issues.

97.   The issues generally bothering on the propositions of the African Youth Charter and those elicited from the analysed findings, plays significant role in determining the level of success of youth active citizenship and participation.

1.4.4.2 Youth Volunteerism in Ghana

98.   Volunteerism has the potential of harnessing available human resource with requisite competencies for development at a lesser cost. It has a huge benefit for society at large and also the volunteer in many ways, such as the acquisition of skills, varied experiences and understanding of cross-cultural issues. It reinforces self-esteem, self-fulfilment, self-confidence and the spirit of togetherness for nation-building. For States, it helps in identifying skills

availability and an appraisal of citizens' commitment and their adherence to national values such as nationalism, patriotism, unism and communalism. These benefits are in line with Caprara, et al. and UN Volunteers (2016) that, volunteerism strengthens social integration and the sense of belonging of the youth while at the same time enhancing the skills and capacities necessary for personal development and employability.

99. Volunteerism in Ghana before independence and the immediate post-independence period was quite vibrant and almost natural amongst citizens and in most cases, unsolicited. Majority of these volunteers were the youth. However, in recent times youth volunteerism has dwindled and there seems not to be any clear indication of change for the better. The situation has been blamed on weak and uncommitted leadership, economic hardship, perceived corruption, diminishing social support systems, loss of communalism, patriotism and nationalism, lowering and disregard for family values and limited incentives for future progress (reward of jobs, scholarships, etc. for volunteers).

100. In championing the course of volunteerism, a number of institutions and organisations such as Voluntary Work-camps Association of Ghana (VOLU), the Coalition of Volunteering Organisations, Ghana (COVOG), the National Service Personnel Association under the National Service Scheme and the National Youth Authority (NYA) are playing significant roles in promoting volunteerism in Ghana. However, in as much as these efforts of stakeholders are laudable, there is the need to reinforce collaboration and coordination.

1.4.4.4 Youth Conflict and Peace-Building

101. Many social scientists and human development practitioners hold the view that conflict is a natural phenomenon and therefore cannot be completely eradicated in the human endeavour. It is positive when it seeks to register contrary views and postulates options or alternatives for the better achievement of common purpose. However, conflict becomes problematic when the intended purpose or outcome is destructive to development and brings chaos or anarchy.

102. Negative conflicts impede socio-economic growth, destabilise Nations with ramifications of injuries, destruction of properties, displacement of people, and death. In Ghana, common causes of violent conflicts include chieftaincy, political power, inter-ethnic conflict, land disputes, affections or associations, and religion.

103. On the other hand, peacebuilding bridges the gap that might have been created by wanton or violent upheavals resulting from conflicts. In some uncertain situations, peacebuilding can be preventive; taking proactive actions to maintain existing peace or promote activities and programmes that promote peace among people, societies or States. Primarily, the aim of the UN, the AU and as in Ghana, the National Peace Council is the resolution, maintenance and promotion of peace.

104. Even though Ghana enjoys relative peace, the emergence of conflicts around the country seeks to undermine peaceful coexistence. Most regrettably, the youth, the future of the country, are either perpetrators or victims of these conflicts. In some bizarre situations, they are nearly used as instruments of violence. The involvement of the youth is more eminent in conflicts involving land, chieftaincy, politics, religion, and recently sports.

105. The high rate of unemployment coupled with high level of intolerance, indiscipline, lack of transparency, breakdown of the social value system, anxiety, depression, exposure to violent extremism, indoctrination, mistrust for leadership and lack of confidence in the conflict resolution systems are prominent pull factors for youth involvement in these conflicts. However, the emerging trends of few youth groups supporting in conflict resolution and peacebuilding across the country is equally laudable and commendable.

106. Most of the conflict resolution mechanisms, strategies and processes have been extensive, except for the necessity of intensifying the involvement of the youth at all levels.

1.4.5 Cross-Cutting Issues and Youth Development Mainstreaming

107. Cross-cutting issues, generally deal with acceptable principles that enhance human development and protection. It must be integrated and mainstreamed through all stages of policy formulation to ensure that desired goals are achieved. The concerns surrounding youth development and progress are multi-faceted and multi-dimensional and thus, require collaborated and well-coordinated solutions. Thus, a multi-sectoral approach is relatively the most effective strategy for dealing with youth problems. Hence, issues such as gender, disability, social protection, vulnerability, climate change and other social exclusion factors should not only be viewed as cross-cutting but need to be consciously mainstreamed into all interventions in order to achieve the desired results.

108. The Commonwealth Report on Youth Mainstreaming in Development Planning (2017), emphasises the need for the mainstreaming of youth issues as critical part of pursuing a vision for an egalitarian world. The publication reiterates that mainstreaming helps to embed young people's aspirations into development planning and ensure equality between youth and adults. It connects democracy initiatives to equitable development outcomes for young people and communities.

109. The focus of youth mainstreaming is on:

  · Ensuring youth-centric institutions and processes in development planning within and across all sectors to realise equitable development for youth and society.

  · Ensuring youth participation in all spheres and levels of development planning, without which, positive and equitable outcomes for youth are not possible.

  · Acknowledging the implications of inter-generational relations among youth and adults, and young people's unique developmental rights and evolving capacities in conceiving and delivering policies and plans for them.

110. The review of this policy leading to relevant actions ascribe to the aforementioned as has been duly related to stakeholder discussions.

1.4.5.1 Demographic Dividend and Youth Statistics

111. The concept of Demographic Dividend presupposes that state and non-state actors could take concrete steps to harness the advantages of the youth bulge to direct their collective energy, talents and enthusiasm for accelerated national development.

112. According to the 2020 Population and Housing Census (PHC), Ghana's population age structure is transitioning from one dominated by children (0-14 years) to one dominated by young people (15-35 years): The proportion of children declined from 41.3 percent in 2000 to 35.3 percent in 2021, while that of young people increased from 34.6 percent in 2000 to 38.2 percent in 2021. The rapid youth population growth could hinder or promote socio-economic growth depending on the interventions put in place by stakeholders. The large youth population could be mobilised to support productive sectors of

the economy, create wealth and deliver critical social services to the citizenry. However, the neglect of this critical mass of the population could certainly be injurious to development and adversely affect the future of Ghana.

113. Moreover, an enabling environment needs to be created for the youth to acquire critical productive skills, a sense of civic responsibility, patriotism, volunteerism, discipline, and engage in healthy living life styles, which is lacking in many circumstances.

114. Meritoriously, several institutions and organisations are striving in both planning and programme implementation to take advantage of this youth bulge, an essential resource. Even though some dividend has been achieved, the level of reinforcement, mobilisation and expansion of strategies and resources seems challenging and inadequate.

1.4.5.2 Vulnerability and Social Inclusion

115. Development endeavours involve the consideration of varied human perspectives essential for societal harmony and existence. Society is made up of diverse social groupings whose respective interest ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and, representative decision-making at all levels. 116.   In many situations, interventions targeted at the youth do not often benefit a good number of them, leading to low success rates. This could be attributed to gender inequality, disabilities, vulnerability and social exclusion.

118. However, the Rio+20 Conference Outcome Document, **'the Future We Want',** recognises among others, that creating opportunities to influence people's lives and future requires their participation in the decision-making process as fundamental for sustainability. This is increasingly lacking in many situations of our review, even though substantial resources are invested in promoting maximum social inclusion.

119. n Ghana, many development interventions, including social, economic, political and religious programmes seek to guarantee that vulnerable groups are integrated in all processes and that the benefits are cut across and directed at specific needs. The socio-economic transformation, embarked by governments, mainly targets gender parity as a major concern for redress. Efforts are being made to ensure women have equal balances as their male counterparts at important decision-making levels, such as public services, private enterprises, traditional institutions and national politics.

120. A chunk of these interventions is targeted at the youth. Even though, available data suggests significant improvement in gender parity among the youth in the targeted areas, the teeming numbers and other socio-cultural barriers militate against the desired rapid results expected. The situation is even more precarious as imbalances in the system are considered. For example, gender parity is more pronounced in education, general public sector services, and micro and small-scale businesses. However, the phenomenon deteriorates in leadership roles and top decision-making positions.

121. Ghana's commitment to the United Nations and other international conventions and protocols enjoins her to ensure that the welfare of persons living with disabilities is not only heightened but also, integrated in all national development agenda. Yet, there are varied development interventions that consciously or unconsciously fail to conform to these obligations or produce the desired results.

122. The United Nations 2018 *"World Youth Report: Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development"* made the following observations:

    · Unemployment among persons with disabilities exceeds 80 per cent in some countries.

    · Educational disadvantage experienced by young people with disabilities inevitably has a negative impact on their employment prospects.

    · Young people who are able to secure employment tend to work in low-paying or informal jobs.

    · Globally, there are strong links between disabilities, poverty and, the lack of access to decent work.

    · Unemployment rates are high among young people with disabilities, in part because they are less able to secure access to quality education that meets their specific accessibility needs.

    · For young people with disabilities who are economically active, finding quality employment that matches their skill level is a constant struggle— one with its roots in persistent social biases and negative perceptions regarding the capacity of persons with disabilities to perform in a competitive workplace.

    · Young people with disabilities entering or in the workforce are doubly disadvantaged, as they are up against negative perceptions and

stereotypes.

123.	The situation in Ghana is not extremely different from the above observations. Young people living with disabilities are disadvantaged even in social activities such as sports, marriage, and headship. Additionally, the supporting materials, gadgets, equipment and other supporting devices and institutions to enhance the integration of disabilities are either weak, inadequate or non-existent. For instance, though adaptive and assistive technologies exist for young people living with disabilities, accessibility is limited.

124.	Apart from these explicit exclusions, some development interventions generate projects and activities that results in vulnerabilities of young persons as their unintended consequences results in adverse outcomes for young persons. This analysis further reveals that young people who are engaged in domestic work, itinerant work and head portage ("kayayee") are more prone to vulnerability in terms of economic and social exploitation.

1.4.5.3 Social Protection

125.	Social protection, generally with the aim of tackling poverty and protecting vulnerable group from risk and unintended consequences of socioeconomic dynamics and policy deficiencies, forms the basis for secured and acceptable living. Thus, stronger societies develop aggressive systems aimed at protecting and supporting vulnerable groups to live actively and happily.

126.	Traditionally, Ghana is known to have had family and community social protection safety nets. The families and communities provided security and other basic needs whiles governments supported with the enabling environment. This collaborative effort, has been effective but unfortunately began deteriorating as the extended family system continuously give way to the nuclear family system. This negative phenomenon is even worse in urban areas compared to the rural areas.

127.	In order to bridge this gap and reduce poverty and inequality in Ghana, governments instituted measures such as the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP), Capitation Grant, Free Senior High School, School Feeding Programme, Microfinance and Small Loans Centre (MASLOC), portion of the District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF) for People Living with Disabilities (PWDs), among others.

128. Even though these measures are yielding positive results, their desired impacts are yet to be realised as increasing vulnerabilities among the youth population confront limited resources.

1.4.5.8 Youth and Crime

129. Peace and security are prerequisites for development, harmony and social cohesion, but, invariably, this is hampered by the incidence of crime and juvenile delinquency. This is evident by the frequency of youth crime reportage on various media platforms. Notably, the incidence of violent behaviours such as murder, armed robbery, gang-related violence, neighbourhood-riots, cyber-crime, kidnapping and abductions have become prevalent among young people in the Ghanaian society. In addition, other deviant behaviours such as ritual killings for money ("sakawa"), religious extremism, fraud among others are also incidences reported among the youth.

130. The impacts of these vices pose serious threats to public safety and national security. The emerging trend is a grave challenge to the security services, social welfare, prisons and other stakeholders whose mandate border on national security and public safety.

131. The issues of poverty, destitution, hunger, gender inequality, poor education and training, substance abuse and unemployment are among the push and pull factors that drive the youth into crime and other deviant behaviours.

1.4.5.9 Culture, Religion and Tourism

132. Ghana is home to many different beliefs, traditions, languages and religions. This diversity is reflected in the youth demographic. Generally, there exists diversity in religion – the majority self-identify as Christians (71.2 percent) followed by those who believe in Islam (17.6 percent), leaving only a small minority adhering to traditional religions (5.2 percent); (GSS, 2013).

131. Both culture and religion have been identified as two fundamental aspects of youth identity and serve to shape the relations between groups of different ethnicities and their belief systems. It is instructive to note that Ghana for many years, has been rediscovering the intrinsic values and aspirations of the nation in order to form a post-colonial national identity. Unfortunately, globalisation seems to draw the youth towards foreign culture, values and attitudes. These behavioural tendencies in many cases are at variance with the Ghanaian culture and traditions.

132. The embracing of these cultural practices among the youth leads to the following;

- Decline and adulteration of local languages,

- Change in sexual behaviour,

- Decline in extended family system,

- Decline in social protection safety net,

- Gradual elimination or disregard for the Ghanaian value system.

133. Cultural practices such as the inheritance system and the belief that young people do not have the requisite capacity to manage their own affairs but must depend on the elderly, as in some circumstances, has the potential of denying the youth of their rights and privileges. Respect for the elderly, as an ordained principle, and rightly so, guides the process of youth development by putting a naturally assumed responsibility on elders to support the youth through counselling, guidance, mentorship and coaching. However, our review finds that an over-exercise of this power of respect denies the youth the opportunity of questioning un-understandable situations, thereby denying them of the opportunity from learning from experiences. This may result in the formation of low confidence, less curiosity, low self-esteem, apathy, less proactive in challenging the status quo and breeding of corrupt and deviant youth.

134. In Ghana, religion plays a significant role in unifying the society, bridging cultural, ethnic and tribal barriers. There is also inter-faith collaboration. These are suitable grounds for youth cohesion and development. Most faith-based institutions provide livelihood supporting services to the youth which include;

- **Career Services:** - Guidance and Counselling, Leadership and Managerial Training

- **Education:** - Skills Development, Entrepreneurship Training, Scholarships, Sponsorships

- **Health:** - Special Packages for Health Services, Education and Sensitisation on Health Issues

- **Social Protection:** - Shelter, Food, Clothing, Vulnerable Situations, Mobility Aids/Gadgets

135. Despite the laudable contribution of religion to the development of the youth, certain religious practices hinder progress. For instance, the over-orientation of the youth to believe that wealth can be achieved solely through spiritual interventions, does not develop positive minds of the youth for hard-work, smart thinking, creativity and innovation. This has the potential of promoting laziness, waywardness, crime, ***"get rich quick"*** attitude and a sense of irresponsibility.

136. Inter-connected with religion and culture is tourism. Ghana is blessed with a huge tourism potential that when developed and promoted, would contribute significantly to the advancement of our culture, generate employment and create wealth for the youth as well as increase revenue for economic development. Tourism can also bring about immense exposure of the youth, broaden their understanding of cross-cultural issues, and promote national unity and cohesion.

137. Our review indicates huge interest of the youth in domestic tourism and cross-national tourism but highlighted constraints such as poor development of tourist sites, cost of tourism, poor road networks, threat of harm, and insecurity.

138. Culture, Religion and Tourism remain relevant for the socio-economic development of the youth. However, there are intrinsic and extrinsic issues as aforementioned and many others that need to be addressed to make them maximally useful for the youth.

1.4.6 Institutional Framework for Youth Development in Ghana

139. Effective and efficient youth development are a function of comprehensive framework and an institutional arrangement of stakeholders with clearly defined roles and responsibilities aimed at ensuring that policies and programmes are well-coordinated and concerted actions harmonised for the achievement of desired results.

140. Youth development is multi-dimensional, cutting across all sectors and involving various stakeholders. In Ghana, achieving coordination and coherence at policy and implementation levels, particularly in youth development, has become a major challenge for governments and key stakeholders. This is due to the existence of policy conflicts, duplication of functions/activities, non-judicious utilisation of resources, and unhealthy competition among key actors.

141. Even though there is clear institutional setting such as a transition from the Presidency, National Development Planning Commission (NDPC), the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) as well as the Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) and their sub-structures for development planning and implementation, there appear to be limited collaborative interface. Despite the definition of entry points for Development Partners, Civil Society, Non-Governmental Organisations and other actors, the implementation of programmes and activities remained unstreamlined and highly uncoordinated.

1.4.7 Youth and the Future

142. The development of the youth must not only be based on national and international aspirations but also, linked with the inspiration and the aspiration of the youth themselves and the overall purpose that they arrogate to their personal development and perceived well-being.

143. The Coordinated Programmes for Economic and Social Development Policies (2017 - 2024), seek to create opportunities for effective youth participation in all sectors and their positive influence in national socio-economic development and political governance.

144. Coincidentally, the preamble of African Youth Charter acknowledges the following:

   · Increasing calls and the enthusiasm of youth to actively participate at local, national, regional and international levels to determine their own development and the advancement of society at large.

   · The call in Bamako (2005) by the youth organisations across Africa to empower youth by building their capacity, leadership, responsibilities and provide access to information such that they can take up their rightful place as active agents in decision-making and governance.

145. Additionally, the AU Agenda 2063 envisions that *"By 2063, Africa will be a continent where all citizens will be actively involved in decision-making in all aspects of development, including social, economic, political and environmental. Africa will be a continent where no child, woman or man will be left behind",* whiles the United Nations Youth Strategy (Youth 2030) has the objective as *"The strategy aims to facilitate increased impact and expanded global, regional and country-level action to address the*

needs, build the agency and advance the rights of young people in all their diversity around the world and to ensure their engagement and participation in the implementation, review and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development as well as other relevant global agendas and frameworks".

146. The Strategy also envisions *"A world in which the human rights of every young person are realised; that ensures every young person is empowered to achieve their full potential; and that recognises young people's agency, resilience and their positive contributions as agents of change",* with five Priority Areas; thus,

- Engagement, participation and advocacy – amplify youth voices for the promotion of a peaceful, just and sustainable world

- Informed and healthy foundations – support young people's greater access to quality education and health services

- Economic empowerment through decent work – support young people's greater access to decent work and productive employment

- Youth and human rights – protect and promote the rights of young people and support their civic and political engagement

- Peace and resilience building – support young people as catalyst for peace and security and humanitarian action.

147. A comprehensive analysis of the findings of the review leading to the formulation of this policy reveals that, the aspirations and general orientation of the youth of Ghana are in great consonance with the aforementioned national and international aspirations. The herculean challenge of being the future of the nation and at a global level is apparently conceptualised and internalised. However, the enabling attracting and pushing factors such as coaching, mentoring, modelling, counselling and guidance, as well as deliberate planning and implementation of succession programmes and policies seem problematic.

1.5 SWOT Analysis

148. The youth constitute an important segment of Ghana's population and therefore any investment towards harnessing this demographic dividend has the potential to contribute to a more sustainable and resilient economy. To

achieve the desired results, a thorough assessment of prevailing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that can positively or negatively affect outcomes were identified.

149. The SWOT Analysis highlighted key factors, which have been considered in the development of this National Youth Policy as a strategic document. It exposes the immense advantages that can be derived from harnessing this great potential human resource, as an important niche ready for emerging technologies.

1.5.1 SWOT Analysis of Youth Situation in Ghana

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Growing youth population • Creativity and innovation • High ICT orientation • A corps of trainable Youth • High passion for success • Energetic and vibrant • High academic qualifications • High talents • Adaptable and adoptable • Resilient • Immense entrepreneurial interest	• Restrictive knowledge • Weak entrepreneurial skills • High illiteracy rates • Misconceived ideas • Lack of financial literacy • Low orientation in sexual and reproductive health • Low self-esteem • Poor knowledge of labour market • Loss of patriotism and nationalism
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Availability of information and communication technology infrastructure • Government commitment to international protocols and conventions • Platforms for entrepreneurial benefits e.g. AfCFTA	• Drug trafficking, human trafficking, and money laundering • Harmful cultural practices • Existence of parallel institutions • Natural disasters, pandemics and climate change • Limited job opportunities

• Commitment of Development Partners to youth initiatives	• Fragility, conflict and violence
• Ghana's high global image	• Unregulated drugs and hard substance
• Available resources at decentralised level for youth programmes and initiatives	• Negative indoctrination
	• Insecure borders
• Multiple platforms for youth advocacy	• Political instability in neighbouring countries
• Inherent or intrinsic socio-cultural values for youth development	• Unmonitored and unevaluated programmes
• Existence of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions	• Mismatch between education curricula and the job market demand
• Diverse youth support programmes	• Low private sector development
• Availability of youth-oriented initiatives	• Low economic expansion
	• Limited financial support for the youth
• Stable democracy	• Inadequate resources
• High tolerance of diversity	• Weak family and social support systems
	• Weak enforcements
	• Mismanagement and corruption
	• Political, economic and social inequalities
	• Weak engagement platforms
	• Social exclusion
	• Data unavailability, inaccuracy and unreliability

1.5.2 SWOT Analysis of Youth Interventions

Strengths	Weaknesses
Policy interventions	• Poor coordination
• Constitution of the Republic of Ghana	• Ineffective institutional collaboration
• National Youth Authority Act 2016, Act 939	• Irregularity of resources
• Youth Employment Agency Act 2015, Act 887	• Weak monitoring and evaluation mechanisms
• Ghana National Service Scheme Act 1980, Act 426	• Poor communication and engagement
• Ghana Enterprises Agency Act 2020, Act 1043	• Difficulty in accessing financial resources
• Local Governance Act 2016, Act 936	• Red tapeism and stereotyping
• Persons with Disability Act 2006, Act 715	• Skills mismatch
• Coordinated Programmes for Economic and Social Development Policies (2017 - 2024)	
• National Employment Policy 2015	
• National Social Protection 2016	
• National Migration Policy 2016	
• National Labour Migration Policy 2020	
• National Health Policy 2020	
• National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme	
• Youth in Agriculture Programme	
• Nation Builders' Corps	
• Planting for Food and Jobs	

• Covid-19 Alleviation and Enterprises Support (Ghana CARES "Obaatan pa" Programme) • African Youth Charter • Sustainable Development Goals **Institutional Structures** • Ministry of Youth and Sports • National Youth Authority • Ghana Youth Federation • Ghana Education Service • Technical, Vocational Education and Training Service • Chamber of Young Entrepreneurs	
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Decentralised structures • High mobile telephone penetration • Support from Development Partners	• Unhealthy competition • Duplicating efforts • Underemployment and unemployment • Interference • Wars and conflicts

1.6 Key Policy Issues

150. In view of the above, this policy would address the following key issues:

- High rates of unemployment among the youth, particularly graduates and persons with disabilities.

- Lack of timely labour market information and comprehensive active labour market services.

- High rates of poverty and vulnerability among the youth.

- Financial exclusion among young people.

- Increasing irregular migration and abuse of young migrant workers.

- The gap between knowledge acquired and industry requirement.

- Inadequate professional trainers, leisure parks, and sporting facilities for the youth.

- Inadequate education and services for sexual and reproductive health, substance abuse, HIV & AIDS, and limited use of contraceptives.

- Recruitment and training of young people into factional groups, disputes and conflicts.

- Limited infrastructure and supporting systems for the promotion of healthy life styles among the youth.

- Poor nutritional status among young parents and their children.

- Abuse of social media, security, illegal mining, theft and kidnapping.

- Inadequate conscientisation about the effects of climate change among the youth and limited structures for the development of "green" skills and climate resilient innovations.

- Weak structures and lack of incentives to develop the craft and creativity of the youth for sustainable livelihoods.

- Weak sense of patriotism, volunteerism and civic responsibility among the youth.

- Limited utilisation of the potentials of ICT for innovative solutions, economic growth and decent job creation.

- Inadequate measures to address social, political and economic marginalisation of young women and girls.

- Increasing social, political and economic marginalisation of young persons with disabilities and other vulnerabilities.

- High incidence of youth in crime and inadequate reformative services.

- Inadequate participation of the youth in political governance, community development and decision-making.

- Inadequate systems and structures for youth development at all levels.

- Prevalence of violence against the youth, particularly women and young persons with disabilities.

- Limited access to legal representation and counsel for juveniles "in-conflict-with-the law".

- Ineffective involvement and participation of the youth in international affairs

- Minimal sense of responsibility of the youth on their omissions and commissions

- Weak formalisation of youth groupings

- Lack of formalised mentoring and coaching, guidance and counselling structures and systems

- Lack of mechanisms to track the progress of youth achievers

- Lack of accurate, reliable and segregated data on youth development

1.7 Scope of the Policy

151. The Policy provides a framework for the coordination, collaboration and facilitation of all interventions aimed at improving the welfare and development of the youth (15 to 35 years) in all spheres of life. Concurrently, in the fast-changing world with increasingly advanced technology, coupled with huge talented youthful population, it focuses on strengthening institutional capacities, facilitating innovation, creativity, value addition and the removal of barriers to enable active participation of the youth in governance, leadership and overall developmental affairs.

152. In the aforementioned context: persistent socio-economic dynamism, the Policy addresses specific issues pertaining to economic and financial empowerment of young people, youth health and well-being, training and development, youth participation in governance, cross-cutting and youth development mainstreaming, institutional framework for youth development in Ghana and youth and the future.

153. The Policy which spans for a period of ten years (2022-2032) is applicable to National and Sub-national levels in Ghana, all Public Organisations, National

and Sub-national officers, the Private Sector, Development Partners, Non-State Actors, Ghana Youth Federation, Youth-focused and Youth-led organisations, and Individual Youth.

1.7 Youth Profile in Ghana

154. The current youth population in Ghana has some unique diversification with specific needs, challenges and opportunities for each cohort group. For instance, the Ghana 2021 PHC Provisional Report indicate that young people (15-35 years) are more in urban (60.5%) than rural areas (39.5%) with an accumulated reduced transition from children to young people as the report states *"the transitioning of the population from children to young people is evident in all regions and in urban areas. In urban areas, Greater Accra depicts the most pronounced transition while in rural areas across all the regions, the transition is yet to occur";* as in previous submissions. The composition of young people in Ghana is detailed below:

Composition of Young People in Ghana by Sex

Age Range	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
15 - 19	10.9	10.6	21.5
20 - 24	9.5	9.6	19.1
25 - 29	8.3	8.7	17.0
30 - 34	7.6	7.8	15.4
Total	**36.3**	**36.7**	**73.0**

Source: 2021 PHC

155. The policy considered other special categorisations for relevance of planning and programming youth interventions to include:

    i.   Male and Female

    ii.   Skilled and Unskilled Youth

    iii. In-school and Out-of-school

    iv.   Rural and Urban

    v.   Literate and Illiterate

    vi.   Engaged and Idle

vii. Employed and Unemployed, Under-employed

viii. Sheltered and Unsheltered

ix. Married and Single

x. Migrant and Non-migrant

xi. Detained and Non-detained

xii. Challenged and Unchallenged

xiii. Adolescents and Young adults

xiv. Organised and Unorganised

1.8 Policy Review Process

156. The process of developing this policy was rigorous, participatory and all-inclusive. It involved all stakeholders in the youth development enterprise with focus on the identification of gaps and areas for improvement in the existing policy. Relevant findings were integrated into the succeeding policy with the view to aligning its goals and aspirations with national development agenda and international trends.

157. The consultative platforms were numerous and varied. Even though many of these consultations were in-person workshops, seminars, symposia and town hall meetings, virtual platforms were also employed. There were also extensive expert and professional consultations with comprehensive desk reviews of similar policies at sub-regional and international levels.

158. During the entire process, over 12,000 people from over 60 public and private institutions, as well as, individuals were directly consulted. These included representatives from Government, political parties, local government institutions, traditional authorities, and youth development practitioners, youth groups, academia, the private sector, development partners, CSOs, NGOs, CBOs, FBOs and religious bodies. It is estimated that officers of the Ministry of Youth and Sports and National Youth Authority spent over 52,715 work hours within 13-months. A Technical Committee was composed to lead discussions, coordinate working teams and appointed individuals. The composition of the final policy is a product of several reviews at national and sub-national levels.

1.9 Content and Structure

159. The content of this policy is situated in context and preferred in four distinguished chapters characterising the nature of contemporary issues and the direction of the agenda of Ghana, the empowerment of the youth and the entry point of relevant stakeholders. In line with this, Chapter One deals with the background, elicits comprehensive situational analysis, provides scope of the policy and ends with a description of the content and structure of the entire policy document.

160. Concurrently, Chapters Two and Three are prescriptive. Chapter Two in particular, details the contextual underpinnings of the policy in national and global perspective, provides rationale, and enumerates key objectives and guiding principles with relevant legal frameworks stated. The processes involved in the detailed stakeholder engagement for the development of the policy are equally highlighted in the same Chapter. As a sequel, Chapter Three propagates the policy objectives and specifies required strategies for effective policy implementation.

161. As the last chapter, Chapter Four centres on the implementation arrangements. It elaborates proposed structures adaptable for effective policy implementation and the roles as well as responsibilities expected from key stakeholders. Additionally, indicative funding sources for programmes and projects as well as the tracking of achievements via monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are provided in this chapter. The need for periodic policy review and sharing results with key stakeholders arises and has been duly considered in this final chapter.

162. Finally, there are supportive preliminary auxiliary context and content proffered in this document which are not construed under the aforementioned chapters, but are firmly arranged and serve as compliments at the pre and post content of the entire policy document.

CHAPTER TWO

POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

163. The policy context discusses the relevant national and international development dynamics that derive significant implications for the reviewed policy being developed and implemented. Some legal requirements, regulatory frameworks, international protocols and conventions, as well as key national and international policies regarding youth development are not just stated, but assessed to inform policy options. Ghana has signed on to several protocols and conventions and by constitutional requirements, ratified their legitimacy by parliamentary sovereignty. Consequently, the legal regime and established policy framework relating to youth development, though contextualised, is in line with these agreements and protocols.

2.2 Global and National Contexts

164. The Preface of the United Nations World Programme of Action for Youth (2010) states *"The United Nations has long recognized that the imagination, ideals and energies of young people are vital for the continuing development of the societies in which they live. The Member States of the United Nations acknowledged this in 1965 when they endorsed the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples. Two decades later, the United Nations General Assembly observed 1985 as the International Youth Year: Participation, Development and Peace. It drew international attention to the important role young people play in the world, and, in particular, their potential contribution to development. In 1995, on the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year, the United Nations strengthened its commitment to young people by directing the international community's response to the challenges to youth into the next millennium. It did this by adopting an international strategy—*

The World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) provides a policy framework and practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of young people. It contains proposals for action, aiming at fostering conditions and mechanisms to promote

improved well-being and livelihoods among young people. The WPAY focuses in particular on measures to strengthen national capacities in the field of youth and to increase the quality and quantity of opportunities available to young people for full, effective and constructive participation in society".

165. Similarly, the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE) 2006-2015 emphasised the relevance for governments, development partners, youth networks and young women and men as valued partners in youth development processes. The PAYE assists member states to establish and maintain enabling conditions that will allow young men and women to be empowered through to the next decade and beyond. It encourages the application of the rights-based approach to development. Thus, the need to ensure full participation of young women and men in the development process.

166. Following this development, and with commitment to the AU Agenda 2063, the African Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (APAYE) was developed to:

- Identify priority and strategic actions for youth empowerment in Africa

- Guide the development and implementation of high impact programmes and policies. These include measures to accelerate action on key flagship programmes and initiatives, and mainstreaming youth issues into work across other sectors.

- Mobilise, convene and coordinate stakeholders at national, regional and continental levels to work coherently and synergistically to achieve youth empowerment outcomes on the continent.

- Monitor progress of youth empowerment to serve as a framework for mutual accountability among key stakeholders. This will require support from a strong research, monitoring and evaluation and learning agenda.

167. Article 12 of the African Youth Charter entreats State Parties to develop a comprehensive and coherent national youth policy with the following characteristics:

- Cross-sectoral in nature considering the interrelatedness of the challenges facing young people;

- Informed by extensive consultation with young people and cater for

their active participation in decision-making at all levels of governance in issues concerning youth and society as a whole;

- Integrated and mainstreamed into all planning and decision-making as well as programme development. The appointment of youth focal points in government structures shall enable this process;

- Have mechanisms to address youth challenges which are framed within the national development framework of the country;

- Provide guidelines on the definition of youth adopted and specify subgroups targeted for development;

- Advocate equal opportunities for young men and for young women;

- Be informed by baseline evaluation or situation analysis for prioritising issues for youth development;

- Adopted by parliament and enacted into law

- Have coordinating mechanisms that provide platform, as well as serve as link for youth organisations to participate in youth policy development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of related programmes;

- Have time-bound and connected to national implementation programmes and evaluation strategy with indicators, clearly outlined;

- Programme of action accompanied by adequate and sustained budgetary allocation.

168. These protocols and agreements are being enforced and Ghana as a member state to the UN, Commonwealth and the AU, is party to them. Ghana has also signed and ratified the UN Convention on Rights of the Child, UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the Marrakesh Treaty that obliges the Government of Ghana to ensure that the needs of PWDs are met to enable them participate effectively in development. It also implements policies and programmes aimed at achieving the SDGs by 2030.

169. In order to streamline development, the Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies (2017-2024) recognises the need to review the conceptualisation and implementation of youth development programmes. In addition, the National Medium Term Development Policy Framework (2022-2025) by the National Development Planning Commission

(NDPC) has aligned about 70 percent of its provisions to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which has specific targets to be achieved with the full participation of the youth, girls and women, persons with disability and other vulnerable groups.

170. The National Youth Authority has been established; and in 2010 the National Youth Policy of Ghana launched, but without an implementation plan until 2014. There were previous youth policy interventions that preceded the 2010 version. However, these did not address youth development as a matter of human rights.

171. There are also existing programmes and policies that are designed with the common purpose of addressing social and economic gaps in youth development. Those currently pursued include Youth in Agriculture, Youth in ICT, Youth Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme, Nation Builders' Corps, National Service Scheme and Youth Afforestation Programme.

172. The overwhelming youth population confronted with huge unemployment creates unfriendly situations such as crimes, illegal occupations of the youth (illegal mining, prostitution, drug peddling, unlicensed gambling, cyber-crimes etc.). The situation of increasing urbanisation creates immense pressure on the youth to migrate to city centres and offshore in search of greener pastures. 173.   The prolonged drought and other natural disasters in many parts of Ghana, the unfriendly land tenure system, stringent requirement for financial assistance for establishment of businesses, intense competition for opportunities as a result of globalisation, weakening social protection support systems, delink between educational curriculum and job requirement among others persist.

174. As Ghana becomes attractive by the level of its economic progress, as a middle income country, characterised by fairly stable economy, stable democracy and relative peace, the inflows of young people from neighbouring countries (mostly politically unstable) is increasingly eminent and poses threat to security. In this regard, the Strategic Plan of the National Security, considers the teeming youth, if left unattended to, a threat to national security in the near to distant future.

2.3 Legislative Frameworks

175. The provisions of this policy are guided by the contents of existing national policies, legislations, international development frameworks, treaties,

protocols, and conventions. Besides those discussed under (2.2), the following are lists of the key ones:

i   1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana

ii   Ghana Revenue Authority Act, 2009, Act 791

iii   Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1999, Act 490

iv   Immigration Act, 2000, Act 573

v   The Immigration Regulations, 2001 (LI 1691)

vi   Labour Act, 2003, Act 651

vii   Persons with Disability Act, 2006, Act 715

viii   National Labour Commission Regulations, 2006 (LI 1822)

ix   Labour Regulation, 2007 (LI 1833)

x   National Pensions Act, 2008, Act 766

xi   The Petroleum Commission Act, 2011, Act 821

xii   Public Procurement Act, 2012, Act 663

xiii   Alternative Dispute Resolution Act, 2010, Act 798

xiv   Ghana Investment Act, 2013, Act 865

xv   National Youth Authority Act, 2016, Act 939

xvi   Youth Employment Agency Act, 2016, Act 887

xvii   Technology Transfer Regulations, 1992 (LI 1547)

xviii Factories, Offices and Shops Act (FOSA) 1970 Act 328

xix   Workmen's Compensation Law, 1987 PNDCL 187

xx   Ghana AIDS Commission Act 2016, Act 938

xxi   Public Private Partnership Act 2020, Act 1039

xxii   Cybersecurity Act 2020, Act 1038

xxiii Ghana Enterprise Agency Act 2020, Act 1043

xxiv Ghana Education Trust Fund Act 2000, Act 581

xxv Ghana Export Promotion Authority Act 1969, Act 396

176. The following policies make provisions that are coherent to this National Youth Policy (2022-2032):

i   Coordinated Programmes for Economic and Social Development Policies (2017-2024)

ii   Ghana Industrial Policy, 2010

iii   National Policy on Public Private Partnership, 2011

iv   National HIV Workplace Policy, 2012

v   Ghana National Urban Policy, 2012

vi   Ghana National Environment Policy,2013

vii   Ghana National Climate Change Policy, 2013

viii   National Local Economic Development Policy, 2013

ix   National Decentralisation Policy Framework, 2015

x   National Employment Policy, 2015

xi   Ghana National Housing Policy, 2015

xii   National Social Protection Policy, 2016

xiii   National Migration Policy, 2016

xiv   Labour-intensive Public Works Policy, 2016

xv   National Labour Migration Policy, 2020

xvi   Ghana Trade Policy, 2018

xvii   National Health Policy 2020

xviii   National HIV&AIDS Strategic Plan (NSP 2021-2025)

xix   National Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Entrepreneurship Policy

xx   National Rural Development Policy, 2019

xxi Sustainable Development Goals

2.3.1 Legal Foundation for the National Youth Policy

177. The authority for the origination of policy in Ghana is the Executive, headed by the President. Thus, public policies are propagated by the Executive and implemented by sector agencies. The Ministry of Youth and Sports is the apex of the sports and youth development sub-sector in Ghana. It is part of its core functions to assist the Executive in the formulation of policies that will guide the development process. As a Civil Service institution, Section 2 of Act 327 provides that the Service functions to assist Government in the formulation and implementation of government policies for the development of the country. This mandate is placed on the Ministry under Section 13 of Act 327. Thus, the preparation of this policy document falls in line with the mandate of the Ministry of Youth and Sports overall deliverables. However, implementation will be coordinated by the National Youth Authority.

178. The policy development cycle spans problem identification and analysis through monitoring and evaluation to policy review. The 2010 National Youth Policy provides that periodic reviews be undertaken after every five years of implementation. The 2022-2032 National Youth Policy fulfils this obligation.

CHAPTER THREE

POLICY FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

179. The formulation of policies and their implementation must be fully guided with a clear purpose and direction. The vision, simplified by the goals and objectives in specific themes, facilitates understanding of the nature and quality of desired aspirations for youth development. The cardinal principles, underlying planning and execution are deemed necessary and accordingly illustrated.

3.2 Vision

180. The 2022-2032 National Youth Policy envisions:

"EMPOWERED YOUNG GENERATION, CREATING SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT"

181. This vision, emanating from several stakeholder discussions serves as motivation for public investment, key stakeholder planning, designing and implementation of youth interventions. It provides a central focus for all push and pull factors for the overwhelming youth to aspire in their quest to develop themselves, accept responsibilities and desire to achieve their aspirations in a humble, just, fair, peaceful, transparent and accountable manner. The purposes of state and other key stakeholders' responsibility for youth development is clearly encapsulated in the *"Empowered Young Generations".*

182. This vision is intended to be transported to its desired destination by the theme:

"BENEFIT FOR YOUTH INVOLVE YOUTH: TOGETHER FOR A PROSPEROUS FUTURE"

3.3 Goal

183. The overall goal of this policy is:

"TO DEVELOP CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE YOUTH APPROPRIATELY EQUIPPED WITH SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY, PATRIOTISM AND NATIONAL PRIDE WITH ADVANCED

TECHNOLOGY RELEVANT FOR NATIONAL AND GLOBAL DYNAMICS"

184. This goal, extending from that espoused in the 2010 National Youth Policy and its achievement, embraces the future desired position of the state of Ghana regarding the youth. It also takes into consideration resource availability, technology, the future of development and changing demographics.

3.4 Key Objectives

185. In order to achieve the overall goal of this policy, the following key policy objectives would be pursued by Government, Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Municipal, Metropolitan and District Assemblies, Private Sector, Development Partners, Civil Society and other stakeholders:

   - To promote decent job creation, employability and livelihood empowerment for the youth.

   - To promote universal health coverage, inclusive health service delivery, healthy lifestyles and total wellbeing of the youth.

   - To develop institutional capacities and schemes that support youth skills transfer, creativity and innovation.

   - To enhance the participation of the youth in governance, community development, decision-making, and elevate their sense of civic responsibility.

   - To establish institutional framework for coordination of youth development interventions and mainstreaming.

   - To promote the fundamental human rights, physical and reformative development of young persons, including young women and young persons with disabilities, at all levels.

   - To develop resilient and self-reliant youth.

   - To facilitate the participation of youth in international affairs.

   - To promote a quota system to enhance access of the youth to opportunities.

   - To strengthen coordination through monitoring and evaluation of youth interventions.

3.5 Core Values

186. The policy vision, broad goals and objectives cannot be sustained without embracing and enforcing core values that are sincerely dear to the tenets of positive and multiple beneficial results. In this regard, the 2022 – 2032 National Youth Policy will promote:

- Discipline

- Excellence

- Honesty

- Team spirit

- Learning

- Knowledge

- Service

- Selflessness

- Hard work

- Global

3.6 Guiding Principles

187. This policy is formulated on the following general and core principles.

The general principles are:

- The Government of Ghana recognises that sustainable development requires a constantly improved **human capital.**

- The Government of Ghana is aware that a **well-disciplined and skilful** youth is an asset for national development.

- Since the youth of today are leaders of tomorrow, the state has the absolute obligation to equip them with the **knowledge, skills, competence and leadership** required to meet the development challenges of tomorrow.

- That effective intervention is a **Shared Responsibility** of all stakeholders, that the youth, the prime beneficiaries of the policy must **take maximum**

responsibility and ***interest*** in their success and optimally support full implementation of interventions.

- All countries globally, are turning to the development of the youth as a catalyst to sustain their development. Ghana cannot be left out of this global phenomenon.

188. The core principles are:

- **Gender equality:** The Policy is formulated to ensure that men, women, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups are supported, mainstreamed and provided with equal opportunities to participate in national development. This is to be achieved through appropriate affirmative action.

- **For ALL Ghanaian youth, everywhere:** The policy is envisaged to be implemented to achieve participation and access to services relevant to the youth in all sectors and locations of the country. This is to ensure that "No one is left behind".

- **Holistic, Competency and Transparency:** Youth development initiatives should encompass all aspects of a young person's life. Youth workers and other stakeholders must be competent in addressing youth development issues. Institutions and organisations involved in youth development should operate in a professional, transparent and accountable manner.

- **Nothing for youth, without youth**: This policy promotes a commitment to the principles of non-tokenistic youth participation in national development. It requires stakeholders to involve the youth in decision-making, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and interventions.

- **Alignment with other national and international policies:** This NYP aligns itself to existing national development policies, relevant international conventions, charters and development frameworks. It recognises the roles of ALL stakeholders in youth development in Ghana.

- **Outcomes and Results-focused:** The NYP is structured to focus on achieving results for Ghanaian youth. The expected results are outlined in the policy outcomes.

- **Positive youth development:** Youth development would be pro-active, targeted towards all youth, involving them as active participants and

roping all members of the community to provide support services.

- **Youth development mainstreaming:** Government and stakeholders would continue to include youth development in all policies and implementation plans as short, medium to long-term development approaches.

- **Institutional collaboration and linkages:** The NYP recognises unique specialisation and associated constraints between and within institutions and is determined to harmonise unique strengths and potentials for the minimisation of weakness. It is determined to succeed through institutional collaboration and linkages.

- **Resource mobilisation and usage:** The NYP recognises the essential role of resource mobilisation and deployment for the success of interventions and is determined to eliminate wastage.

- **Data-driven interventions:** It is envisaged that all planning, designing and implementation of interventions would be based on accurate and reliable data. It is believed that interventions formulated on evidence will address core issues.

- **Collective responsibility and ownership:** The NYP will strive on the willingness of all stakeholders to uphold and defend its existence. The commitment of all stakeholders will promote ownership and sustain investment.

- **Continuity and persistence:** The success of the NYP hinges on its continuous implementation throughout its life period prescribed in the analysis. Thus, it is designed to persist from political and administrative changes and will fit well in core policy changes as cardinal dynamics in youth development staggers.

3.7 Policy Preconditions

189.   The success of this policy is envisaged to hinge on the following preconditions:

- *Sustain investment* in the youth by Government and the private sector.

- National Development Policy Frameworks over time **must anchor the concerns/issues of the youth and design specific strategies** to overcome them.

- The State must make a *deliberate attempt* to imbue in the youth a spirit of *nationalism, patriotism, civic responsibility and a sense of public service and morality.*

- The youth will *avail themselves* to take advantage of the *unfolding development opportunities.*

- Youth development is seen as an all-inclusive endeavour, therefore the Private Sector, Civil Society Organisations (CSO's) and Development Partners are prepared to make *conscious efforts to incorporate youth development issues* into their agenda.

- The *existence of global frameworks* that will guide the implementation of the policy.

CHAPTER FOUR

STRATEGIC POLICY ACTIONS
(Strategies to Achieve Key Policy Objectives)

4.1 Introduction

190. The key policy objectives outlined in chapter three constitute a breakdown of the overall policy goal. However, operationalisation of these objectives require implementers to pursue some strategic actions aimed at addressing the policy issues. These actions guide implementation and drive activities to achieve desired outcomes. In line with the intended objectives, the policy will pursue **Key Strategies** being discussed below:

Objectives 1: To promote decent job creation, employability and livelihood empowerment for the youth

191. Economic empowerment of the youth focuses on putting in place mechanisms and structures that facilitate development of capacities and opportunities for the youth, including young women and young persons with disabilities, to enable them participate gainfully in the national, international and global economies. These include innovative skills transfer, business development assistance, provision of social security, rural development and poverty reduction initiatives, establishment of active labour market support systems, accelerated job creation, improved security at the workplace, enhanced remuneration and conditions of service, strengthening of associations and unions, among others. The aim is to promote economic independence and prosperity of the youth. The strategies also include harnessing the benefits of labour migration to enable the youth to engage in gainful livelihoods and support national development.

192. The strategies for this policy objective are:

    i.   Accessibility to regular labour market services that highlight the needs of the youth, young persons with disabilities and young women.

    ii.   Implementation of livelihood interventions towards ensuring the independence of young persons in vulnerable situations.

    iii. Facilitation of implementation of measures, including reforms in public

procurement for accelerated decent job creation.

iv. Promotion of implementation of a youth enterprises classification system for Business Development Services at all levels.

v. Implementation of schemes that facilitate safe placement of young migrant workers for national development.

vi. Establishment of effective legal structures, frameworks and initiatives for the protection of creative ideas and intellectual property of young people.

vii. Establishment of facilitating systems and structures for commencement and sustainability of entrepreneurship.

viii. Improvement of market accessibility and distribution systems for goods, products and services of young entrepreneurs.

ix. Enhancement of partnership for business development of young people.

x. Promotion of local economic development and the sensitisation of young persons on local potentials.

Objective 2: To promote universal coverage, inclusive health service delivery, healthy lifestyles and total wellbeing of the youth

193. The ability of the youth to participate in national development is partly dependent on good health. This policy objective therefore seeks to implement measures that facilitate access to health services that meet the health needs of the youth. This makes available information that promote healthy lifestyles and informed healthy behaviour among young people. It involves strengthening social support systems and collaboration between key stakeholders to address issues of substance abuse, mental health and stress. It includes promotion of leisure and recreational activities as part of inculcating healthy living habits. It is equally important to ensure that safe spaces, mentorship and coaching facilities are provided as essential part of improving the health and wellbeing of the Ghanaian youth. It seeks to incorporate nutritional needs of young parents and their children for redress by the responsible state and non-state actors.

194. The following are the strategies required for the realisation of this policy objective:

i   Implementation of an effective sexual and reproductive health structures and systems beneficial to all young persons.

ii Implementation of programmes to reduce new infections and the provision of support services to youth with Sexually Transmitted Infections including HIV and AIDS.

iii Ensuring parity in service delivery in all health centres and accessible to all young people.

iv Provision of adequate funding for youth responsive health services in the national budget to ensure universal access by all young persons.

v   Implementation of public education programmes and incentive schemes to discourage early marriages and teenage pregnancies.

vi Promotion of inclusive sports, fitness and wellness lifestyles through recreational activities at all levels.

vii Implementation of regulations to improve administration of mental health, substance use, promotion and utilisation of restricted and/or prohibited substances.

viii Adoption and implementation of a national strategy with a life-cycle approach to address malnutrition at all levels.

ix Institutionalisation and strengthening of psycho-social support systems and structures.

Objective 3: To develop institutional capacities and schemes that support youth skills transfer, creativity and innovation

195. The youth, being the base of the labour force require the acquisition of the necessary skills and attitudes that enable them to participate fully and meaningfully in the economic transformation and political advancement agenda of the country. This calls for bold and sustainable actions to achieve the development and maintenance of human resources and intellectual capital of youth in Ghana. In view of this, measures should be taken to improve institutional capacities for innovative skills transfer and utilisation, including green skills, access to Information and Communications Technology (ICT), focusing on Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and Artificial Intelligence. It also includes broadening youth participation in sports and cultural activities as a means of promoting positive values, behaviour and advancing their economic

development. It is expected that young people will be empowered with life skills that enable them to prepare for and benefit from national and global economic opportunities, climate change and environmentally sustainable projects and programmes.

196.   The following are strategies to achieve this policy objective:

i   Facilitation of access of the youth to advanced technical and vocational education for innovative skills and technologies.

ii   Implementation of the National Technical Vocational Education and Training Qualifications Framework to include Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in admissions or re-admissions in all districts.

iii   Provision of state-of-the-art ICT Centres or laboratories in all Junior and Senior High Schools, districts and communities, focused on Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) skills and Artificial Intelligence integrating the needs of PWDs as well as other marginalised groups.

iv   Promotion of entrepreneurship education at all levels of education.

v   Promotion of youth participation in climate action, environmental issues and "greening" of education, including TVET.

vi   Development of business skills for self-employment and employability for all young persons.

Objective 4: To enhance the participation of the youth in governance, community development, decision-making and elevate their sense of civic responsibility

197. This key objective seeks to promote the participation of young people in governance and decision-making processes at all levels in order to ensure representation of their views and the elevation of their sense of civic responsibility. The youth also possesses tremendous manpower required for accelerated development. The strategies of this policy objective, therefore, focus on promoting a democratic, stable and peaceful environment for gender equity and equality of treatment for girls and young women, youth with disabilities, youth at risk, and youth in special circumstances to enable them participate fully in development. It also seeks to establish mechanisms that would make the youth an integral part of conflict resolution efforts for the promotion of peace and security in the communities.

198. The following strategies would be operationalised to achieve this policy objective:

i Implementation of measures that promote youth participation in governance and decision-making, particularly, young women and young PWDs.

ii Institutionalisation of structures and systems to ensure effective participation and representation of youth, particularly young women and young PWDs at all levels.

iii Implementation of sustained sensitisation and awareness creation campaigns and programmes aimed at educating the youth on Youth-related policies and programmes.

iv Promotion of pro-youth programmes and policies at all institutions and levels, including political parties; and district, regional, national and international movements.

v Promotion of the spirit of constructive nationalism, patriotism, volunteerism, Pan-Africanism and community service among the youth.

vi Integration of conflict prevention, dispute resolution and peace-building into formal and non-formal education programmes and promote security consciousness among the youth.

vii Promotion of institutionalisation of mentorship, coaching, guidance and counselling across public and private institutions at all levels

viii Promotion of programmes aimed at building community co-existence and youth relations.

ix Revitalisation of community gatekeeping role on youth development.

Objective 5: To establish institutional framework for coordination of youth development interventions and mainstreaming

199. Effective youth development is facilitated by a strong, efficient and well-structured institutional framework at all levels. It requires setting professional standards for personnel and institutions working in the youth development sectors and establishing mechanisms to ensure compliance. It is important to implement specific projects and programmes that are devoid of duplications but integrated and interconnected with strong mainstreaming mechanisms.

This policy objective therefore seeks to establish institutional structures and regulatory frameworks to support implementation of overarching interventions that would facilitate effective mainstreaming and management of youth development.

200. These strategies include:

    i.   Institutionalisation of mechanisms at all levels to support youth mainstreaming and coordination of implementation.

    ii. Promotion of professionalism in youth development practice.

    iii. Harmonisation of all youth development activities.

    iv. Establishment of Youth Development Fund.

    v.   Collaboration with relevant institutions for the alignment of all policies and programmes in line with the National Youth Policy and the Implementation Plan.

Objective 6: To promote the fundamental human rights, physical and reformative development of young persons, including young women and young persons with disabilities, at all levels

201. This policy objective seeks to protect and promote youth rights regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, ability and other status without any form of discrimination - in accordance with the 1992 constitution, laws and other international protocols and conventions. It aims at the generation of sex and disability disaggregated data on implementation of all interventions and provide reformative, rehabilitative and recreational services to support integration of the youth in the Ghanaian society. It seeks to ensure that all forms of discrimination against the youth are removed and the youth actively participate in conflict resolutions as well as promotion of peace and security in the communities.

202. The following strategies would be implemented towards achieving this policy objective:

    i.   Implementation of a national roadmap on demographic dividend in line with the provisions of this policy.

    ii. Protection and promotion of the rights of the youth regardless of disability and social status.

iii. Strengthening of youth-focused reformative programmes for rehabilitation and reintegration of youth-in-conflict with the law and ex-detainees.

iv. Facilitation of the incorporation of youth development indicators in the national census, surveys, and related data to facilitate diverse analysis of youth-related issues.

v. Sensitisation of the youth against criminal activities and institutionalisation of effective reformative programmes in correctional centres.

vi. Promotion of sensitisation and enforcement on rights of young vagrants

vii. Promotion of the enforcement of workplace ethics and code-of-conducts, including policies and programmes aimed at eliminating the exploitation of young people.

viii. Facilitation of the enforcement of structures and systems for fair pay of young employees.

Objective 7: To develop resilient and self-reliant youth

203. The New World Order and contemporary challenges pose serious repercussions on personal development and in some cases, youth businesses. The youth in Ghana face multi-dimensional challenges that affect their businesses and general welfare. The growing challenges in the fast changing world make the youth vulnerable, disadvantaged and unable to cope with these pressures. Lacking the capacity tools and support to handle these challenges, the youth have become liable to shock and stress that affect their lifestyles, relationships and businesses. The application of certain laws, rules and regulations are generally legitimate and are meant to achieve goals in the nature of national aspirations but may have the potential of affecting the youth negatively. Climatic changes, disasters, wars, strikes and other civil unrest or destructions have consequential effects on the youth and this could be extremely disastrous.

204. This policy seeks to provide protection and build robustness for youth resilience and self-reliance. In this regard, the policy strategies for this objective will include:

i. Promotion of programmes and activities aimed at developing mental, physical, and psychological resilience of the youth.

ii. Support the implementation of rehabilitative structures and systems at all levels.

iii. Development and promotion of adaptation and coping skills.

iv. Promotion of accessibility to assurance and insurance systems and structures.

Objective 8: To facilitate the participation of youth in international affairs

205. The youth in Ghana have huge potential but require extensive exposure to develop these potentials into lucrative ventures beneficial to themselves, the nation and the world at large. Even though several opportunities have been made available to the youth, it is commonly problematic when the required knowledge, skills and competencies are lacking in order to take advantage of these opportunities. This objective is aimed at providing the requisite capabilities for the youth to participate meaningfully in the global arena.

206. Thus, the strategies to achieve this objective will be as follows:

i. Provision of relevant fora and platforms for knowledge transfer.

ii. Development and implementation of programmes aimed at building competencies and confidence.

iii. Development and implementation of international collaborations and networking.

Objective 9: To promote a quota system to enhance access of the youth to opportunities.

207. This policy objective seeks to facilitate a national dialogue and ultimately bipartisan roadmap for implementation of a youth quota system for Ghana. The aim is to increase youth involvement in governance and all other sectors of national life. It is also expected to make provision for reservation of 'slots' for employment opportunities at all levels, including the private sector. The policy objective is to ensure 'specific youth provision' for local content frameworks in all sectors of the economy.

208. The strategies to achieve this objective are:

i. Organisation of national dialogue among stakeholders to arrive at feasible roadmap.

ii.   Implementation of agreed roadmap on the institutionalisation of the quota system.

iii.   Promotion of advocacy among stakeholders for commencement and ownership.

Objective 10: To strengthen coordination through monitoring and evaluation of youth interventions

209.   The National Youth Policy strategises to strengthen systems and structures required to ensure that all youth interventions are in line with planned implementation and achieving desired results with the youth as the central focus. It will take effective monitoring and evaluation to ensure that this good intention materialises.

210.   Thus, the strategies for this objective will include:

i.   Implementation of well-structured monitoring and evaluation plans at all levels, linked to a masterplan.

ii.   Establishment of robust system of data collection, storage and management of youth-related interventions.

iii.   Provision of platform for consistent stakeholder engagement.

CHAPTER FIVE

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 Introduction

211. The implementation arrangement and structures for the policy, highlights or elaborates the roles and responsibilities of key institutions as well as the resource mobilisation. These arrangements ensure effective implementation of policy interventions as they eliminate role conflict and reduce redundancy. Resource mobilisation plan provides guidance for sources of funding and the mobilisation of the necessary human resource and other materials.

5.2 Implementation and Coordination

212. In order to prevent policy failures, a comprehensive Implementation Plan is developed to facilitate policy implementation. The Implementation Plan focuses on activities required for the operationalisation of the key policy objectives and their strategies. It details the timeframes for carrying out the activities within and without collaborating institutions. Since youth development issues are multi-sectoral in nature, it is expected that the implementation arrangements would ensure coherence and cooperation among institutions. Implementation will require a significant demonstration of political commitment and the dedication of leadership by all stakeholders at all levels. Government would strengthen partnerships and networks among all state agencies, the private sector, development partners, non-governmental organisations, and civil society organisations for the effective implementation of this Policy.

213. For the purposes of effective coordination, the Ministry of Youth and Sports playing the oversight role, will oversee the National Youth Authority (NYA) ensure that implementation is coordinated and outputs are delivered on time so that outcomes are achieved in the stipulated timeframes for the benefit of the youth. In view of this, NYA would establish new reporting lines and strengthen existing ones in order to ensure seamless flow of information throughout the period of implementation. It will also provide effective institutional framework for collaborating and coordinating all activities of stakeholders involved in the implementation of youth programmes in Ghana. The NYA will therefore oversee the harnessing, promotion and

supporting systems of government, development partners, and promoters of youth programmes within the national and sub-national level of Ghana. The coordination will emphasise on the harmonisation of activities and programmes of both state and non-state actors.

214. Generally, the implementation process will include the development of implementation plan that details strategies, activities, targets, responsibilities, performance indicators, timelines as well as financial and non-financial resource requirements. The coordination and implementation will employ stringent approaches such as youth-oriented programming, youth mainstreaming, intervention sustainability, professional delivery, knowledge acquisition, show of evidence and skills transfer.

215. The Implementation Plan will be subject to formative (quarterly, mid-year) and summative (annually) reviews. The detailed Implementation Plan is attached as appendix one.

5.3 Institutional Arrangements for Implementation

216. Effective implementation of the National Youth Policy requires the collective efforts of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), Municipal, Metropolitan and District Assemblies (MMDAs), the Private Sector, Development Partners, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Religious Bodies and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). These institutions and organisations would lead or collaborate with sister institutions for the implementation of specific policy strategies and activities. The following is the list of key institutions and organisations responsible for the operationalisation and implementation of policy objectives and strategies, aligned to their respective roles and responsibilities.

Key Roles and Responsibilities

A. Ministries, Departments and Agencies		
No.	Institutions/ Organisations	Key Roles and Responsibilities
1.	Ministry of Youth and Sports	MoYS or the Ministry responsible for youth development is responsible for the policy oversight of the implementation of the National Youth Policy.
2.	National Youth Authority	NYA is responsible for the coordination of all implementation activities and implementation of major youth development interventions that promote interests of the youth as expressed in this policy. It is also to ensure that youth interventions are properly regulated in line with the aspirations of the NYP.
3.	Ministry of Finance	It will manage the national budgeting processes to promote youth development issues and increase national budget allocations to youth development projects and programmes on an incremental basis. It will that fiscal policies in such a way that impact positively on the youth.
4.	National Development Planning Commission	NDPC has oversight responsibility of the national planning systems. It will be responsible for ensuring that objectives of this policy are mainstreamed into the medium term national development frameworks and the results systems for implementation by all state agencies.
5.	Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations	MELR is responsible for policy oversight on employment/labour related issues affecting the youth and coordination of all job creation interventions in both the public and private sectors. MELR would ensure availability of labour market information and active labour market policies to support economic empowerment of the youth.

6.	Ministry of Education	MoE is responsible for policy oversight in the education sector. MoE would collaborate with all stakeholders to develop educational programmes that meet the standards required for the national and international markets.
7.	Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation	MESTI is responsible for policy oversight for the development of interventions that promote the application of science, technology and innovation to accelerate the national development agenda. MESTI would collaborate with other organisations to promote the application of technology and innovation among the youth.
8.	Ministry of Communication and Digitalisation	MOC&D would provide policy oversight for the development of reliable and cost effective up-to-date communication infrastructure and services driven by appropriate technological innovation accessible by the youth, including young women and young persons with disabilities for their economic empowerment at all levels.
9.	Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture	MFA is responsible for policy oversight for interventions aimed at effective management of the fisheries sector and industries in it for national development. The Ministry will collaborate with relevant agencies to facilitate the participation of the youth in fisheries and aquaculture development as lucrative employment.
10.	Ministry of Food and Agriculture	MOFA is responsible for policy oversight for the development of interventions that support the youth to engage in agriculture and agribusiness. MOFA would collaborate with the private sector and MMDAs to facilitate the development of agriculture related businesses in the districts.

11.	Ministry of Health	MOH is responsible for policy oversight for the development of interventions that target adolescent and youth health issues. MOH would partner with government agencies at all levels, practitioners and the private sector to design, sponsor and direct the delivery of youth responsive health services.
12.	Ministry of Information	In collaboration with all stakeholders, MOI would lead information dissemination programmes throughout the country through the Information Services Department.
13.	Ministry of the Interior	MOI is responsible for policy oversight and coordination of operations of internal security. It would put in place measures to safeguard the security of the youth in all spheres of the national life.
14.	Ministry of Justice and Office of the Attorney General	MoJOAG is responsible for legal oversight of all issues relating to the implementation of the provisions of this policy. MoJOAG would therefore offer legal advice on any issue that may emerge in the course of implementation.
15.	Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development.	MLGRD is responsible for policy oversight for ensuring good governance and balanced development of the MMDAs. It would therefore coordinate the implementation of this policy at MMDAs to ensure coherence and cooperation of all stakeholders at the local level. In collaboration with OHLGS and MMDAs, MLGRD may initiate policies and programmes aimed at integrating youth affairs and participation of the youth in rural development.

16.	Ministry of Trade and Industry	MoTI is responsible for policy oversight for the development of trade relations and industries. It would develop projects and programmes that enable the youth to participate actively in the industrialisation and economic transformational policies of Government in collaboration with private sector organisations. It would do this taking into account the needs of young women and young PWDs. It will also facilitate processes for the youth to take advantage of AfCFTA.
17.	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice	Initiate measures to speed up investigation and resolution of disputes relating to abuse of the rights of the youth within country.
18.	Council for Technical, Vocational Education and Training	COTVET is responsible for coordinating all TVET activities and ensuring that training programmes meet existing standards and quality. COTVET would lead the full implementation of a National Technical, Vocational Education and Training Qualification Framework, and establish a competency-based programme for technical and vocational training institutions. COTVET would lead all other interventions for the improvement of TVET and access of the youth and prescribed by this policy.
19.	Department of Social Welfare and Community Development	It will be responsible for ensuring the protection and safety of young vulnerable persons including young persons in foster homes, rehabilitation and skills centres.
20.	Office of the Administrator of the District Assemblies Common Fund	Release funds allocated to District Assemblies for the implementation of projects and programmes that promote youth development. Put in place mechanisms to ensure effective and efficient use of the funds.

21.	Environmental Protection Agency	EPA would collaborate with other state institutions at the national, regional and district levels to implement projects and programmes that sensitise the young about climate change issues, environmental sustainability and development of "green" skills, technologies and innovations. It will also quicken processes and procedures for the certification of businesses young people that require environmental certification.
22.	Extension Services Department of the Ministry Food and Agriculture	ESD would provide technical and advisory services to young farmers to adopt good farming practices. It would also direct and link young persons engaged in agriculture and agribusiness to access support services.
23.	Forestry Commission	It will support the implementation of the policy by encouraging livelihoods interventions for young people in forestry.
24.	Ghana Education Trust Fund	Provide all relevant educational assistance to institutions for the benefit of youth development.
25.	Ghana Education Service	The GES will collaborate with all stakeholders to implement educational curricula that meet the standards required for the national and international markets.
26.	Ghana Export Promotion Authority	GEPA will institutionalise measures aimed at promoting the export of the products youth enterprises.
27.	Ghana Health Service	GHS would supervise the delivery of health services that target adolescent, sexual and reproductive as well as mental health needs of the youth. GHS would facilitate the delivery of youth friendly services, paying attention to the needs of young girls, women and PWDs.

28.	Ghana Immigration Service	GIS would enforce immigration and emigration laws to facilitate migration of the youth in collaboration with other state institutions and the private sector.
29.	Ghana Investment Promotion Centre	GIPC will promote investment opportunities that attract businesses of young people for investment. It will also facilitate the promotion of the products and services of young entrepreneurs.
30.	Ghana Police Service	GPS will reinforce its preventive and community-friendly capacities to prevent the youth from engaging in criminal activities and educate them about the consequences of offending the law. It will put in place measures to bring to book those to who engage in trafficking and commit violence against the youth and young persons in vulnerable circumstances.
31.	Ghana Prisons Service	The Prisons Service will put in place measures to ensure that youth in lawful custody are rehabilitated through appropriate health services, education, psycho-social services and skill to become assets to society.
32.	Mental Health Authority	MHA will implement laws, policies and programmes to promote awareness on general mental health and substance abuse. MHA will institute community-friendly mental health care and rehabilitation services for young people. It will also initiate programmes and activities aimed at reintegrating recovered patients.

33.	Ghana Enterprises Agency	GEA will support initiatives for youth entrepreneurship development by collaborating with other business development agencies, business advisory services, youth organisation, cooperatives and financial institutions at the national, regional and district levels to provide entrepreneurship skills and start-ups.
34.	National Council on Tertiary Education	NCTE will ensure that as part of their core mandate at ensuring standards at tertiary education levels, the interests of the youth are taken into consideration.
35.	National Labour Commission	NLC will expedite action to settle labour disputes involving youth either as employers or employees.
36.	National Accreditation Board	NAB will provide oversight to ensure that the content of academic and training curricula facilitate the acquisition of relevant knowledge and skills for the labour market, support creativity, innovation and responsive to civic duties.
37.	Pensions and Life Assurance Institutions	PLAI will institute measures to motivate young people, timely invest in meaningful pension and insurance schemes.
38.	Job Development Schemes	NSS, YEA and NABCo etc. that provide temporary engagement for the youth will continue sustained measures aimed at providing stopgap measures for youth employment.
39.	Centre for National Culture	CNC will initiate programmes and activities aimed at inculcating culture and Ghanaian values in the youth.
40.	National Health Insurance Authority	NHIA will continue its expansion drive to improve access to health care by vulnerable young persons, including persons with disabilities, persons with mental health challenges and inmates.

41.	National Security	NS will intensify measures aimed at being proactive and pre-emptive in the disturbance of peace and security.
42.	Narcotics Control Commission	NACoC will continue to embark on prevention education activities to curb substance abuse among the youth.
43.	Scholarship Secretariat	Provide scholarship opportunities for young people to pursue their academic and training aspirations and acquire requisite skills for economic empowerment and national development.
B. Local Government Organisations		
44.	Municipal, Metropolitan and District Assemblies	MMDAs are responsible for putting in place the necessary structure to implement this policy in the districts in collaboration with other agencies, development partners, CSOs among others. They will integrate priorities of the NYP into their development plans and mobilise the youth and link them to available youth services in the districts.
45.	Department of Agriculture	Facilitate the development and promotion of pro-youth agriculture programmes across the country.
C. Private Sector		
46.	Ghana National Chamber of Commerce and Industry	GNCCI will collaborate with their members to provide apprenticeship and internship to the youth. They will also provide advisory services for young entrepreneurs.
47.	Banks and Financial Institutions	They will collaborate with the Bank of Ghana to develop investment products and financial inclusion services that will allow the youth to participate effectively in the financial sector.
48.	Cooperative Associations	CAs will provide business advisory services to young entrepreneurs to facilitate mobilization of funds and pooling of resources for sustainable growth of their businesses.

49.	Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations	GFD will advocate and collaborate with state agencies at all levels for sustainable solutions to the issues affecting persons with disabilities. It will also mobilise members to take advantage of the opportunities that this Policy provides.
50.	Ghana Employers' Association	GEA will endeavour to create employment opportunities for young people.
51.	Ghana Youth Federation	GYF will engage state agencies, implementers of the policy and local leaders to advocate and draw their attention to persisting and emerging youth development issues. It will also mobilise members to take advantage of the opportunities that this Policy provides.
52.	Media Houses	Media Houses in the country will collaborate with state agencies, private sector and all actors at all levels to disseminate information and advocacy on issues of youth development.
53.	Trades Union Congress	TUC will collaborate with employers' groups to promote social dialogue and adherence to decent work standards. This is to ensure that rights of the youth at work are respected.
54.	Training Institutions	Training Institutions will collaborate with the Ministry of Education, GES, TVETS etc. to deliver standardized demand-driven training for the youth considering the need of women and PWDs.
55.	Youth Development Service Providers	YDSPs will collaborate with state agencies, youth leadership training institutions, the private sector, NGOs and DPs to deliver specialized services towards the implementation of the provisions of this policy.

D.	Development Partners and Civil Society Organizations	
56.	WB, UNDP, Star Ghana, UNFPA, UNICEF, ECOWAS, AU, WHO, USAID, UKAID, Commonwealth, UNDESA, FAO/IFAD, UNESCO, AfDB, GIZ etc.	DPs will provide technical and financial assistance to the Ministry responsible for youth, NYA and other state agencies as well as NGOs, CSOs, religious bodies and youth organisations to implement provisions of this Policy at all levels. It will also implement pro-youth programmes taking into consideration intrinsic values of the Ghanaian state.
57.	Civil Society Organisations	CSOs will integrate provisions of this Policy in their programmes of work for implementation. In addition, CSOs will conduct advocacy on issues affecting the youth so that relevant state agencies, private sector organisations, youth organisations etc. will take the necessary action to address them. CSOs will strengthen the social support system for the youth, to find safety nets in their communities, create opportunities for the youth to take up leadership roles and also create a healthy society free from violence to enable the youth enjoy physical, intellectual, social and economic wellbeing.
58.	Religious Organisations, Traditional Authorities, and Socio Cultural Groupings.	Religious Bodies, Traditional Authorities and Socio Cultural Groups will mobilise youth in their organisations and communities, assess their needs and collaborate with relevant institutions in the public and private sectors to address those needs in effective and sustainable manner. They will also provide correct moral and spiritual compass to guide the youth in leading responsible adult life. Additionally, they will continue to promote the sanctity of the family unit through the strengthening of both the nuclear and extended families.

217.   In addition to the key roles and responsibilities, stakeholders may take action within their mandates to implement provisions of this policy. The Ministry responsible for youth development is the ultimate ***trustee and lead agency for this Policy document and will provide policy oversight to implementation***. To this end, an inter-ministerial committee will be established to facilitate coordination and oversight across government machinery, based on the principles of ***Youth Development Mainstreaming Approach.*** A wider stakeholders' forum akin to the Technical Committee may be set up to annually review progress reports from the NYA on the implementation of the NYP.

5.4 Additional Implementation and Coordination Structures

218.   Additional structures and platforms will be developed to facilitate mainstreaming, implementation and coordination at the regional and district levels. The Regional Youth Committee of each region will be put in place to bring all stakeholders for deliberations, planning, and assessment of progress.

219.   The District Youth Committee will report to the Regional Youth Committee to give account of the achievements of their district in youth development. The Regional Youth Committee will also report to the National Youth Coordinating Platform established at the NYA.

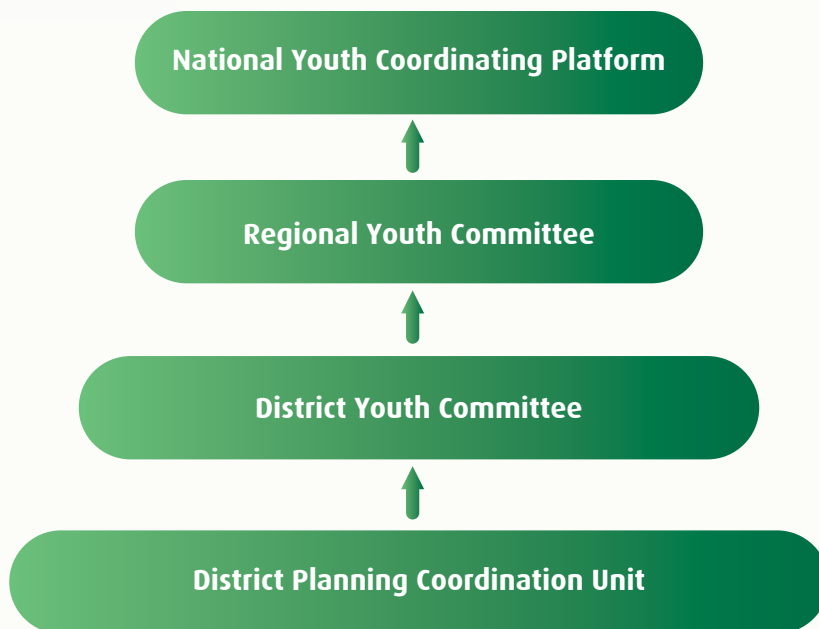Figure 1: Additional Implementation and Coordination Structures

Figure 1 depicts the additional implementation and coordination structures required to facilitate implementation at the national and sub-national levels.

5.5 Resource Mobilisation

220. This Policy will be implemented through the National Budgeting Structures sanctioned by the Ministry of Finance for all public institutions. Responsible public institutions will integrate or align strategies in the Implementation Plan relevant to their operations for implementation through the Annual National Budget Estimates within the Medium Term Expenditure Framework of Government.

221. The Ministry of Finance will put in place measures to ensure incremental changes to the overall annual budget allocations to youth development by Government. The MoYS will continue to mobilise funds and draw five (5) percent of the District Assembly Common Fund, disbursed to NYA, for coordination and implementation of major interventions. In addition, private sector organisations, non-governmental organisations, religious bodies, development partners, civil society organisations and other stakeholders

will enter into collaborations with public institutions for the implementation of provisions of this Policy with funds partly or fully raised by them for agreed interventions. The private sector will also invest funds towards the implementation of this Policy as a contribution to the development of the youth. MoYS being the sector with oversight responsibility for policy implementation will collate, compile and publicise budget allocations and expenditures, on notice, of all private sector organisations that implement provisions of the Policy. 222.   A Youth Development Fund for financing youth development activities will be established. Additionally, biannual youth development financing conferences will be held to evaluate expenditure versus activities and outcomes as well as provide direction for next steps.

223.   The Policy acknowledges the significant role of human resource together with relevant logistics for successful implementation. In this regard, the Policy will employ the mixed approach of acquiring the necessary human and logistical resources. The existing human resource in the public institutions will be strengthened and sustained within existing structures to deliver policy outputs.

224.   Where the need for specialised knowledge, skills and competence are lacking within internal existing institutions (public and private), the strategy will be to leverage on external technical support. The idea will be the provision of avenues for knowledge and skills transfer. Subsequently, the use of local materials will be encouraged with maximum assessment to ensure quality and value for money. The DPs, CSOs, CBOs, think-tanks, academia, publishers, individuals and communities will be encouraged to contribute to research, programme design and implementation. The media will be encouraged to provide publicity for youth oriented programmes as part of their corporate social responsibility.

225.   Finally, interventions between institutions will be managed on structures and facilities of institutions on the comparative advantage principles. Resources will be mobilised and invested equitably with great attention to the level of needs of the youth, vulnerability and geographical locations.

CHAPTER SIX

MONITORING AND EVALUATION ARRANGEMENT

6.1 Introduction

226. The Implementation Plan for this Policy will be accompanied by a robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework. Modalities for monitoring, measuring, and evaluating progress made towards the implementation of this Policy will be integrated into the overall M&E Plan.

6.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

227. The Policy hinges on the principles of integration, collaboration, cooperation and mainstreaming. Thus, the M&E will be anchored on partnership at the national and sub-national levels of government agencies and institutions, development partners, private sector, NGOs, CBOs and other stakeholders, including the youth. It will strive on routine reporting systems to track progress. The Ministry of Youth and Sports together with the National Youth Authority will develop an elaborate monitoring and evaluation framework to be replicated at all levels. An internal M&E mechanism will be put in place by the Directorate responsible for Monitoring and Evaluation at the Ministry to operationalise the M&E Framework in collaboration with the M&E Unit at NYA. 228.The NYA will put in place a mechanism to receive and collate progress updates from implementing agencies and provide a comprehensive annual status report to all stakeholders. These feedbacks will be transmitted periodically to the Ministry to inform policy decisions.

229. A baseline research will be carried out at the onset of the implementation and integrated in the M&E Framework. This will be followed by subsequent researches which will collect disaggregated data on youth development in Ghana to measure progress in specific areas of the youth policy. Periodic evaluations will be conducted to assess the extent to which the various projects and programmes emanating from this policy are contributing to the achievement of the overall policy goal. Each implementing institution will have clearly defined roles in line with their mandates. The monitoring and evaluation will be ex-ante, mid-term and ex-post.

230. Inter-agency coordinating units at the national, regional, districts, communities

and at grassroots level will create similar frameworks for monitoring interventions. A detailed M&E Plan is attached as *Appendix 2.*

6.3 Review Cycle

231. The Policy is designed to span the next ten (10) years (2022-2032) and shall be reviewed at the end of the implementation period. It is expected that sustained implementation will produce the desired results. However, as a living document, it must stand the test of time in context and content, thus, it may be reviewed based on the exigencies of the time, including major changes in policy, laws, regulations and shifts in global focus. Substantively, the policy shall be reviewed every five years from the start of implementation.

CHAPTER SEVEN

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

7.1 Introduction

232.   The communication plan will serve as a major tool to sensitise and empower stakeholders on the understanding of the new direction provided by the National Youth Policy. The awareness to be created and the classification of roles will enhance ownership of the policy.

7.2 Communication Strategy for the Policy

233.   In order to sustain the commitment and support of stakeholders, including the youth, a comprehensive policy communication strategy will be developed and implemented by the implementing agencies. This is to clearly outline the methods and channels of engagement so that appropriate information is disseminated in a timely manner to sustain the interest of all stakeholders.

234.   The communication strategy will also focus on mobilising the youth and creating awareness about their potentials and the contribution that they can make towards national development. The vulnerable groups among the youth, including young women and young PWDs will be encouraged to adopt positive perspectives and elevating their confidence in all spheres.

235.   Primarily, the communication plan will be executed within existing communication structures and systems of the country. Multiple fora, including print and electronic media, social media, durbars town hall meetings, workshops, seminars, symposia, infomercials, etc. will be used. 236.
The Ministry of Information will play lead role in the communication process by overseeing that the Information Services Department carryout the dissemination of key information about the policy to the general public.

237.   The NYA will launch the Policy and ensure that it is accessible to stakeholders. NYA will ensure that the policy document is made available in print and electronic versions in English and some Ghanaian languages in abridged forms. Copies will be made readily available at all youth leadership institutes, leading institutions, metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies, libraries and at NYA offices. Braille copies will also be made available. The Policy

document and Implementation Plan will also be made available for download from the NYA websites and websites of partners. A dedicated campaign to promote the policy and raise awareness of all stakeholders will be undertaken at all levels.

238. Technical teams will be setup at the national, regional and district levels to monitor the progress of implementation of the communication plan and quarterly feedbacks will be used for review. The communication plan, detailing the nature and process of communication is attached as *Appendix 3*.